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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA.

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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FROM time to time the QUARTERLY receives much useful advice and many valuable comments from its correspondents. One of the matters frequently written about is Socialism, and we are continually asked why the magazine opposes a movement which, in the opinion of our querents, is so closely in accord with Theosophical principles. It is because of the great importance of the subject, and because what follows is such a lucid statement of its basic principles, that we have removed a "Question and Answer" from its regular department in the magazine, and print it here. Although not very long, we believe that the kernel of the whole question is contained in this "Answer," and we commend it to the serious and careful attention and study of our readers.

QUESTION: I am unable to understand why the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY takes the attitude it does towards Socialism. I am not a Socialist, though I am acquainted with many who so call themselves; but Socialism is a Brotherhood, and works specifically for the helping and uplifting of Humanity. Why then is not Theosophy, which has the same fundamental objects, in sympathy with it? Surely it cannot be because of different views regarding economic adjustments, as such details would hardly seem to come within the general scope of Theosophic teaching and practice. I would be glad of some definite points.

P. K. S.

ANSWER: The Editor of the QUARTERLY has sent this question to me for reply, knowing that I am in no sense a Socialist, but that I have been for many years a close student of it from various points of view. It is a large and complicated subject,—an incoherent subject in its present stage of indefinite ideals and diverse conclusions and opinions —and therefore one hardly to be dealt with in the contracted space of the "Questions and Answers." I should think, furthermore, that so far

as essential points are concerned, the querent might have found many of these in the various articles on the subject which have appeared in this journal from time to time, and to which reference is made. I may, however, offer certain suggestions which to my mind are pertinent, and afford no escape from the conclusions that the two view-points—Theosophy and Socialism—are, and always must be, diametrically opposed.

First on this matter of Brotherhood. Here Socialism builds a fence and says all who are within it are Brothers; all without, unless or until they can be brought within its limits, are enemies or at least outsiders. (Of course I do not speak of the bitter or aggressive forms of Socialism, as these could hardly enter into our discussion.) This is an immediate recognition of sect or caste or creed; call it as you will, the idea is the same. Theosophy says all men *are* Brothers, regardless of race or sect or creed, or color, or any other distinction; regardless of their goodness or evil; regardless of their recognition of the fact or their opposition to it; regardless of whether they are friends of society, or enemies of it. For this Brotherhood is not an organization, nor can it consist in organization, no matter how widespread or broad, but is in itself a fundamental fact in Nature, the oneness or identity of all souls with the Oversoul. This oneness of soul may and does co-exist with the utmost divergence of mind and emotion. Therefore Theosophy says that for the realization of this Brotherhood, man must become a more spiritual being, must grow into closer contact with the soul where this condition perpetually obtains, and that all which makes man more spiritual makes of necessity for Brotherhood, and all which tends to make him more material, makes against it. So much for theory —the briefest possible indication, but careful study will demonstrate more and more the fundamental cleavage in the two conceptions. Then as to practice. Theosophy holds that Socialism makes not for but *against* Brotherhood in that it makes for material, not for spiritual aims. Theosophy holds that man makes environment, not environment the man, since the soul under propulsion of wisely directed Divine Law, is pushing forever and ceaselessly upward and outward. Theosophy holds that it is our inestimable privilege to aid this process; first by full recognition of it; second by rigid self-purification, ("take first the beam from thine own eye, then shalt thou see clearly to take the mote from thy brother's eye"), and third by removing as far as possible all which impedes the full action of this Divine Law of Evolution in the Universe. In many a detail it could here join hands with Socialism in special acts of reform, but it sees, and sees clearly, that Socialism's *material attitude towards reform* is a far greater bar to genuine progress than the matters it seeks to redress, and therefore as turning men's minds towards the body and away from the soul, Socialism constitutes a barrier *in itself*

to advance, as largely representative of the ignorance and blindness of the mind absorbed in matter, to its true and enduring interest.

The ethics of Socialism preclude belief in the immortality of the soul. I know that this has been and will be vehemently denied; nevertheless those to whom the immortality of the Soul is not an accepted theory but a *living fact,* can read my meaning. "According to your faith be it done unto you," said the Master. We need then above all things to widen and deepen our faith. In these days faith is being wonderfully *broadened,* but with a tendency to become *shallower;* the amount often being no greater, but merely distributed differently. Theosophy rests upon the soul and the soul alone. In its teaching the body is a shadow that comes and goes according as the Light is placed. That which causes the shadow therefore is its concern—the Light, and that which stands before it. D. R. T.

This answer gains additional point from the announcement, made at the beginning of March, that Rev. R. J. Campbell is forming a Socialist organization, which he considers an expression of the ideals of "the new theology." Mr. Campbell is reported as saying that the general attitude of the controlling or official element in the churches is now so plainly hostile to the movement expressed in "the new theology," that something will have to be done to safeguard the aspirations of those who profess adherence to it. We are further told that the central idea of this new movement is "the denial of the divine origin of Christ, who is considered merely as a social reformer." May we venture to underline the connection between these two sentences, and to say that, in our belief, the hostility of the controlling element in the churches to Mr. Campbell's new movement is not only caused, but is also justified, by his identification of "the new theology" with Socialism? In our view, the true "new theology" is simply the expression of spiritual truth in terms of modern thought; it is a movement for spiritual liberty, for a genuine expression of religious consciousness, unhampered by medieval formulas and limitations; and we hold that, as an expression of spiritual truth, it has no more connection with a particular economic theory than it has with a particular fashion in hats; the more so, as the newly restored religious consciousness seems to us to be eminently sound and true, while the economic theory with which it is sought to identify it, is just the reverse. Mr. Campbell is doing all in his power to retard the religious renewal by the essential materialism of his new ideas. He cannot fail to bring discredit on his admirable book *The New Theology* by the very unsound views of his later work, *Christianity and the Social Order.* In THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY for October, 1907, we gave our reasons for denying that Jesus ever countenanced Socialism or anything like Socialism; and to the "Notes and Comments" of that issue our readers are referred.

We have spoken once and again of the wonderful renewal of thought in the last two or three years; that the world at large seems touched with new inspiration, enkindled with new faith and hope. The high ideals for which Theosophists have striven for long years, in good report and evil report, are now on all lips, and presently they will be in all hearts. We hear on all sides of the Brotherhood of Man, of Universal Brotherhood; and though there are some attempted applications of this supreme truth which seem to us quite mistaken, yet there can be no doubt that the zeal for brotherhood is abroad as a great enkindling force, which only needs right direction, to raise the whole of humanity. There are many other ways in which our ideals are being accepted broadcast. One of vital import is the perception that the "heathen" religions are really religions, and not merely "forms of error," as the theologians used to say. Books like *The Soul of a People* and *The Inward Light,* which give us the heart of Buddhism, are signs of the times; and these are only two among many. So our first and second objects are receiving something of their due.

The humor of the matter gleams out, when we come to our third object: the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man. Some of us who have been in the Society and the Movement long enough to remember its early years of persecution, are now finding our compensation. We have lived long enough to see some of the teachings, for which we were most persistently assailed a quarter of a century ago, not only accepted, but bruited abroad with all the enthusiasm of new discovery. We have lived long enough to see throbbed across the ocean by wireless telegraphy, as remarkable novelties, teachings which we have been repeating for twenty or thirty years. We have lived to see the news pages of our papers taken up with cablegrams detailing facts and laws that were set forth even more lucidly in *Isis Unveiled,* whither they were gathered together from the oldest books in the world. And we have lived long enough to accept with entire good nature this wholesale unacknowledged adoption of our thought, and to be heartily thankful that it has become a common possession, whether acknowledged or not.

These musings on old times are suggested by the recent declarations of Sir Oliver Lodge, who, at the end of January, told the Society for Psychical Research that he and his colleagues had obtained conclusive proof of the reality of communication with the dead. Like excavators engaged in boring a tunnel from opposite ends, amid the roar of water and other noises, said Sir Oliver, we are beginning to hear now and again the strokes of the pickaxes of our comrades on the other side. What do we find? he continued. We find the late Edmund Gurney,

and the late Richard Hodgson, and the late F. W. H. Myers, with some other less known names, constantly purporting to communicate with us, with the express purpose of patiently proving their identity. We also find them answering specific questions in the manner characteristic of their known personalities, and giving evidence of knowledge appropriate to them.

Not easily or early, continues Sir Oliver, do we make this admission. In spite of long conversations with what purports to be the surviving intelligence of these friends and investigators, we were by no means convinced of their identity by mere general conversation, even of a friendly and intimate character such as in normal cases would be sufficient for the identification of friends, speaking, let us say, through a telephone or a typewriter. We required definite and crucial proof, a proof difficult even to imagine, as well as difficult to supply. The ostensible communicators realize the need of such proof just as fully as we do, and have done their best to satisfy the rational demand. Some of us think they have succeeded, others are still doubtful. Cross-correspondence—that is, the reception of part of a message through one medium and part through another, neither portion separately being understood by either—is good evidence of one intelligence dominating both automatists. And if the message is characteristic of some one particular deceased person, and is received as such by people to whom he was most intimately known, then it is fair proof of the continued intellectual activity of that person. If, further, we get from him a piece of literary criticism which is eminently in his vein, and has not occurred to ordinary people, then I say the proof, already striking, is tending to become crucial.

These are the kinds of proof, Sir Oliver goes on, which the Society has had communicated to it. The phenomenon of automatic writing strikes some of us as if it was in the direct line of evolutional advance; it seems like the beginning of a new human faculty. First of all, the evidence led us to realize the truth of telepathy, and that was the first chapter of the new volume we have set ourselves to explore. I am going to assume, in fact, that our bodies can under certain exceptional circumstances be controlled directly, or temporarily possessed, by another or foreign intelligence operating either on the whole or on some limited part of it. The question lying behind such a hypothesis, and justifying or negativing it, is the root question of identity—the identity of the control. Some control undoubtedly exists—of that every one who knows anything about the matter is quite certain. This question of identity is, of course, a fundamental one. The controlling spirit proves his identity mainly by reproducing in speech or writing facts which belong to his memory, and not to the automatist's memory. And notice that

proof of identity will usually depend on the memory of trifles. The objection raised that communications too often relate to trivial subjects shows a lack of intelligence, or, at least, of due thought, on the part of the critic. Our object is to get not something dignified but something evidential. And what evidence of persistent memory can be better than the recollection of trifling incidents which, for some personal reason, happen to have made a permanent impression?

Do we not ourselves, Sir Oliver asks, remember domestic trifles more vividly than things which to the outside world would seem important? Wars and coronations are affairs read of in newspapers—they are usually far too public to be of use as evidence of persistent identity, but a broken toy or a family joke or a schoolboy adventure have a more personal flavor and are more likely to be remembered in dreams and second childishness, or when the major consciousness is suspended. In fiction this is illustrated continually. Take the case of identification of the dumb and broken savage, apparently an Afghan prowler, in *The Man Who Was*. What was it that opened the eyes of the regiment to which he had crawled back from Siberia to the fact that twenty years ago he was one of themselves? The knowledge of a trick catch in a regimental flower vase, the former position of a trophy on the wall, and the smashing of a wineglass after a loyal toast. That is true to life. It is probably true to death also. This is the kind of evidence which we ought to expect, and this is the kind of evidence which we not infrequently get. How can we ever by any means hope to prove identity? I reply: In two ways. One is by correspondence, and the other by the receipt of information or criticism new to the world. The boundary between the two states, the present and the future, is still substantial, but it is wearing thin in places.

So far Sir Oliver's most remarkable declaration. Let us now go back a little, and tell the history of the researches whose conclusions he has so brilliantly and eloquently summarized. It appears that the preliminary work of exploration was done by Dr. Hodgson himself, working in Boston with the famous medium, Mrs. Piper, and in his first and second Reports of the Piper case and Further Records, he came out definitely in defence of the spiritualistic hypothesis, of communication through mediums with the spirits of the dead. His second report came out in 1898. Writing to a friend about this time, Dr. Hodgson said: "My interest in psychical research is greater than ever, and it seems to me highly probable that before many years have elapsed there will be much new and valuable testimony before the world as the result of the labors of our society, in favor of the spiritist claim that it is possible for our departed friends under special conditions to make their continued

existence known to us. It is my own conviction that such communication is possible, though I hold that it is not nearly so frequent as most spiritualists commonly suppose."

Professor Hyslop summarizes Dr. Hodgson's later work as follows: "His patience and perseverance were finally rewarded. Though he had much material which had great significance in support of his suit he did not make up his mind until fortune favored him with a long series of investigations in a single group of the most interesting phenomena yet recorded—those of the Piper case. He had been able to publish a part —very small part—of the concrete evidence gathered by his labors in support of survival of personal identity after death. This he regarded as the foundation of his work and he never wearied in his efforts to lay that foundation broad and deep. On this foundation it was his desire to build a structure which would equally explain the perplexities apparent in the problem and the limitations under which the revelations of another life were made. But I believe he had committed nothing to writing of the system he had in mind, save what he had stated briefly on the Piper case, when, on the 20th of December, 1905, he suddenly passed away and left some future successor to gather up the threads which his death so disappointingly severed."

It would seem that, through Mrs. Piper, Dr. Hodgson came into contact with a group of controls, or "spirits," the chief of whom called himself Imperator, and who was familiar to spiritualists as the spirit guide of the late Stainton Moses. On this point, Dr. Hodgson himself wrote in 1901: "I went through toils and turmoils and perplexities in '97 and '98 about the significance of this whole Imperator régime, but I have seemed to get on a rock after that—I seem to understand clearly the reasons for incoherence and obscurity, and I think that if for the rest of my life from now I should never see another trance or have another word from Imperator or his group, it would make no difference to my knowledge that all is well, that Imperator and others are all they claim to be and are indeed messengers that we may call divine. Be of good courage whatever happens, and pray continually, and let peace come into your soul. Why should you be distraught and worried? Everything, absolutely everything—from a spot of ink to all the stars—every faintest thought we think up to the contemplation of the highest intelligences in the cosmos, are all in and part of the infinite Goodness. Rest in that Divine Love. All your trials are known better than you know them yourself. Do you think it is an idle word that the hairs of our heads are numbered? Have no dismay. Fear nothing and trust in God."

This is what it came to. The man who, "self-wise and thinking

himself learned," as the Upanishad says, turned his back on the Masters of wisdom, and sneered at the wonderful powers of Mme. Blavatsky, ends by "finally surrendering his own life to the direction of Imperator"; and pouring out his soul in second rate séance-room piety. Such are time's revenges. But to return to our story. It would seem that, besides Imperator and the old-time controls, Dr. Hodgson came into contact with another class of beings through Mrs. Piper; namely, the disembodied part of certain people recently dead. The pioneer of this band, it would appear, was the individual usually called "George Pelham," or simply G. P., in the Psychical reports, his real name being concealed in deference to the wishes of his friends. G. P. was a young man, well known in university life, and of a rather wild and stormy disposition. He met death by an accident, by falling down the steps of a house and breaking his neck, if our information is correct. He therefore comes into a class very familiar to students of these phenomena, as they are analyzed in the writings of Mme. Blavatsky and others. G. P., shortly after his death, began to communicate with Dr. Hodgson through Mrs. Piper, and in course of time succeeded in convincing Dr. Hodgson completely of his identity. We believe the records of these conversations have been preserved in full and can be consulted by anyone so minded.

Then came Dr. Hodgson's own turn. During the last year of his life, it would seem, he repeatedly expressed the wish to go over to "the other side," to continue his researches. "I can hardly wait to die"; he said to his friends. He did not wait long. Toward the close of 1905, though he had, apparently, been in perfect health, he was warned by "the controls," seemingly Imperator and his band of spirits, that he should avoid violent exercise, because his life was in danger. He disregarded this warning, indulged in a handball tournament, and fell dead in the Boston Boat Club. Within a short time, he was communicating with his friend Professor Hyslop, through the famous Mrs. Piper, thus redeeming a promise he had repeatedly made in life.

One striking incident, which helped to establish the identity of the new recruit on "the other side," is thus recorded by Profsesor Hyslop: Dr. Hodgson—that is, his disembodied part—communicating by automatic writing through the hand of Mrs. Piper, asked:

"Do you remember a man we heard of in—no, in Washington, and what I said about trying to see him? . . . I heard of him just before I came over. Perhaps I did not write you about this."

It seems that, in point of fact, Dr. Hodgson had not written, and Professor Hyslop could make nothing of the communication. A short time after this, however, Professor Hyslop had business in Washington, and happened to meet a gentleman in charge of a department in a large

business house, who mentioned that he had written to Dr. Hodgson a short time before the death of the latter, about a man in Washington who showed signs of mediumistic powers. This at once explained Hodgson's post-mortem remark.

Here is another incident, of the kind which Sir Oliver Lodge calls cross-communication; that is, where fragments, received through different mediums, are pieced together into a coherent whole. Professor Hyslop received an automatic communication from the disembodied Hodgson, through a lady whom he calls Mrs. Quentin. Going a few hours later to another medium, he received a further communication from Hodgson, alluding to the first medium, and saying that the place where the first sitting had taken place was near water. This turned out to be true, as the house was on a bay, though Professor Hyslop was not then aware of this, as he had gone there after dark. Hodgson went on to say that, later in the day, he would try to communicate again with Professor Hyslop through a third medium, Mrs. Smith, and would try to give a message about certain books. Professor Hyslop went to Mrs. Smith that evening, and Hodgson tried to communicate, with no great success, however, though he did manage to say something about books.

It is the cumulative force of hundreds of incidents like these, that has convinced Sir Oliver Lodge and his colleagues of the identity of the controls with their former friends and associates, Myers, Gurney and Hodgson. And it was, we believe, the success of these first experiments with G. P. and Hodgson that led to Mrs. Piper's being asked to go over to England, to make similar experiments under the supervision of Sir Oliver Lodge and his colleagues; and it is the success of these later experiments that is heralded in the address we quoted at the outset. It must not be supposed, however, that Mrs. Piper has been the only channel of communication. On the contrary, as many as ten or a dozen mediums, or "automatists," as Sir Oliver prefers to call them, have been involved. In this way it has been possible to receive the cross-communications alluded to, where fragments unintelligible to the medium themselves have been transmitted through different mediums, and then put together again, like a Chinese puzzle. This of course implies a very intelligent co-operation on the part of the disembodied workers, and a very thorough realization on their part of exactly what is being done, and why it is being done. This co-operation has gone far, if the report is accurate which represents Sir Oliver as saying that, before his death Mr. Myers prepared a paper which he sealed, and had locked in a safe, its contents being known to him alone; and that since his death, he has with full knowledge and purpose communicated the contents of the sealed paper by automatic writing through a medium, and that this message is

identical with the sealed paper, which was later opened. We have not accurate details of this last experiment; so we can only allude to it in passing.

There seems to be a great difference in the power of mediums, or "automatists," to "get a message through," without confusing or diluting it. And even under the most favorable conditions a good deal of the mind of the medium seems to adhere to the message. In the case of automatic writing, there will be a difference of handwriting with each new communicating intelligence; yet at the same time there will be a general resemblance, more or less marked, to the writing of the "automatist" running through the whole. And the vocabulary of the medium will also have its influence, as Dr. Hodgson is reported to have said: "I have to use the medium's word; I cannot get my own word through."

Another very interesting fact has been noted. We spoke, a little while ago, of the disembodied part of "George Pelham," the "G. P." of these experiments, who died a violent death a few years ago. It seems that G. P. attained such proficiency in the art of bridging the two worlds and "getting things through," that he was able to initiate the disembodied Hodgson in his first efforts, and even to supply "power," where Hodgson's own power was insufficient. For if there is a difference in the power and "transparency," so to speak, of the "automatists," there is just as much difference between the powers of "controls," the disembodied persons or beings who are communicating through the mediums. It is said by those who have been carrying on these investigations that, while they have had abundant communication with the disembodied part of the late F. W. H. Myers, they have found it singularly difficult to get from him proof of his identity which, besides satisfying themselves, will have definite evidential value. They have indeed received many communications which seem rather to be free and flowing fiction, let us say poetical improvisation, than mere matter of fact.

This suggests a very interesting question: If we are in this case really communicating with the late F. W. H. Myers, with what part of him are we communicating? And in what state of consciousness is that part? Professor Hyslop has declared his belief that, just as the medium must fall into a trance in order to receive communication from "the other side," so the "control," the communicating personality on the other side must also fall into a trance in order to come into rapport with the medium; and until this process is thoroughly mastered, the communicator is quite likely to have lapses of memory, periods of muttering and incoherent speech, and spells of free and flowing fiction, such as characterize the trance condition. This would account for the irrelevancy, the

inanity even, of vast quantities of communications purporting to come from the "spirit world." We are not communicating open-eyed with a soul wide awake. We are communicating, through the psychic nature of an entranced medium, with a soul which may be in a trance, or dreaming, or even delirious, according to the character of its own psychic state. The medium's trance is not voluntarily entered, or self-induced; nor, it seems, is it induced hypnotically by the experimenter. The fact seems to be that the control on the "other side" hypnotizes the "automatist," and draws the conscious personality out of the body; and then takes possession of the body, perhaps entering it, and using it either for automatic speech or automatic writing, according to the character of the medium and the control. Sometimes two messages are received from different controls through the same medium at the same time, the right and left hands writing independently; and it is said that Mrs. Piper has even given three messages at the same time; two by writing and one by automatic speech.

A rather gruesome tale comes from one of the group of experimenters whose work we are describing. It illustrates this possession or obsession of the body of the medium by a control. The control in this case was a man of science, who had recently died. He was new to the work, and was being taught to communicate by G. P. and others. The experimenter who told the story was called to the door, shortly after the sitting began, and passed behind the medium, who was a woman. Instantly all communication ceased, and the medium remained rigid, in a trance-like condition, for twenty minutes or half an hour. Once or twice she muttered:

"You won't let me die? I don't want to die!"

The experimenter soothed and reassured her, telling her she was in no danger. Finally she returned to her normal self. At a later sitting, writing through the medium, G. P. explained what had happened, saying to the experimenter something like this:

"It did not look as well from this side as it did from that! X—— [the recently deceased scientist] had just taken possession of the medium's body, when you walked behind her and cut off the current. Then X—— suddenly realized that he was in a woman's body, and felt the small hands and skirts, and could not understand what had taken place. He began to rage like a roaring lion, and R. H. [Richard Hodgson] roared laughing at him. Finally we got him out, and even then he had to go through all the process of dying." This probably explains the medium's plaintive muttering: "You won't let me die! I don't want to die!"

We may have to say a good deal more about these experiments, as time goes on. In the meantime, it seems necessary to say this: This

whole system of communicating with the dead through mediums is nothing more nor less than necromancy, and, as necromancy, has been reprobated by the spiritual teachers of all time. It is not merely that mediumship is in the highest degree dangerous and injurious to the medium. And we can well see that the likelihood of being suddenly hypnotized by some being on "the other side," who may be pure or impure, benevolent or malevolent, as the case may be—thrown into a trance, forcibly expelled from one's body, and entirely unable to control the uses to which that body is put by its new and unlawful occupant, presents sufficiently dangerous and shocking possibilities. But there is the further danger, and it is a very real one, to the "communicating entity." We have already seen that there is every reason to believe that the communicating person on "the other side" must fall into a trance state, or be thrown into a trance by some more expert disembodied person; and that communication is sometimes nothing but a mingling of two deliriums, that of the control, and that of the entranced medium. Further, we have, from analogy, every right to believe that these induced trances are as hurtful to the disembodied, as they undoubtedly are to the embodied participants. And we are expressly told by the sages of all time that nothing is more harmful to the recently deceased person than this enforced and artificial return to earth-life through mediumship; and that it constitutes such a disturbance of the nascent spiritual state as to be comparable to the untimely bringing forth of a child. Nothing, we are told, is more harmful, and therefore more sinful.

What repulsive possibilities this kind of necromancy offers, we may judge from a story recently published in France. It seems that a young girl recently died in a hospital, or at least was believed by the medical authorities to have died. Several physicians got permission from her relatives to experiment with her body, which they carried to a laboratory and immersed in a warm bath, through which, after the water had been slightly acidulated, electric currents were passed, mesmeric passes being meanwhile made over the seemingly lifeless body. After awhile, there were signs of returning life. The girl revived, recovered the power of speech, and told an extraordinary story of her previous death, and what had followed it. In the hospital, she said, she had sunk to sleep, and this sleep had merged in an indefinite period of unconsciousness. Then she had recovered consciousness, and felt all her life-forces gathered together in her heart, her consciousness, meanwhile, retreating to a remote corner of her brain. Then suddenly her consciousness passed outside her body completely, and she was able to look down at the body lying on the bed. Then, after awhile, there came a gentle shock, and she felt the last thread connecting her with the body snap. At the same moment, gifted, as it were, with a new power of sight, she saw nameless

monsters contending for her body, and then, some time after this, she awoke to consciousness in the doctors' hands. At this point, the story continues, she became violent, and one of the doctors quieted her by an injection of morphine; quieted her so effectually, indeed, that she was presently dead for good.

There are two possible views of this story, if we set aside the supposition that it is mere fiction. The first is, that the hospital authorities were mistaken, and that the girl was not dead in the first instance, but in a condition of trance or coma, from which she was revived by the electrical and mesmeric treatment. If we accept this view, then it seems quite certain that the girl, having been revived, was killed by the morphine injection; was, in fact, murdered by the doctors, in their horrible experiments. The other supposition is, that the girl was really dead, and that the experimenters really did succeed in bringing her disembodied personality back into her body, and giving her the power to speak and communicate with the living. If so, this is necromancy pure and simple; or rather, impure and simple; just such necromancy as the witches and sorcerers of all lands have indulged in; black magic of the most shocking and sinful kind. What harm may be done to a soul just beginning to enter the higher spiritual states that follow after death, by this kind of assault from the material world, we may imagine; better still, we can obtain the precise facts from the masters of wisdom who have already covered the whole ground of these mysteries in a conclusive and convincing way.

And this brings us to a vital point. It may be said, in extenuation of this horrible necromancy, and it doubtless would be said by men of high aspiration like Sir Oliver Lodge, that, even if it can be shown that grave harm results to both medium and communicating personality through these experiments, nevertheless such good will follow to humanity by the scientific demonstration of immortality, that the harm is but a negligible quantity, and should be willingly incurred: in fact, the same kind of plea as is made for the sin of vivisection. The answer to this is as old as the hills: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Or, to paraphrase, if men are not led into spiritual lives through spiritual teaching, they will never be led into spiritual lives through necromancy, even though it be adorned with the name of scientific research. The truth is, that the views of life after death which are gained by these methods are likely to do more harm than good. They leave out of sight all the higher side of that life, for the simple reason that the communicating "intelligences" are as blind as moles to these higher sides, from which they are shut out just as a materialist is shut out—by the self-induced

limitations of his consciousness—from the higher regions of spiritual consciousness during life. And these higher realms are those which are really concerned with the things of our immortality. Only as we enter into them, can we really progress in spiritual growth, and enter into genuine immortality. The immortality of the séance control is but a false dawn, really a morbid and unnatural condition. And we can see this, if we consider that there seems to be no necessary connection between that kind of immortality and holiness. The really immortal elements, the things of spirit, do not enter into it at all.

We are therefore convinced, on the testimony of the great spiritual teachers of all time, that Sir Oliver Lodge and his colleagues are, with the best intentions, committing grave and far-reaching sin. Under the pretext of revealing spiritual states and spiritual truth, they are really revealing to the gaping multitude the astral rubbish heaps which are appended to our physical earth. They are, on the one hand, concentrating the attention of the living on these rubbish-heaps, to the obliteration of the true sense of the spiritual realms; and, on the other, they are keeping the disembodied personalities of their former friends immersed in these same rubbish heaps, where they are likely to come into contact with all kinds of impurity, and where, on the showing of the experimenters themselves, they must fall into a trance condition akin to delirium, before they can communicate; in which condition they seem often unable to distinguish between truth and falsehood.

If it be asked whether there is not an element of injustice in all this; whether it is not profoundly unfair that great men of science, with the purest intentions, should be allowed thus to stumble into far-reaching sin, honesty compels us to answer that there is no injustice at all. On the contrary, we can see, in this whole development, the clearest, most definite Nemesis. The scientists may excuse themselves by saying that there was no other way to get at these vital truths. This is false. There is another way, and that other way was opened wide before them, before the very men whose names have appeared in the present researches. The Masters of widsom, the great teachers, whether of Eastern of Western birth, in whose possession is the real knowledge of these things, offered that knowledge freely to the very men with whom we are now concerned. Blinded by suspicion, egotism, sheer mental dullness, they not only thrust that wisdom aside, but they repaid the generous offer by calumnies; by pretended exposures, which in reality exposed nothing but their own folly. And having rejected divine wisdom, they have now found their Nemesis. They have fallen into necromancy, of a particularly dangerous and reprehensible kind.

These very men not only rejected divine wisdom, when offered to them. They would not enter in themselves, and those who were entering in, they hindered. They stood between the sages and the world, and persuaded the world not to listen to the sages. This is a grave fault, and grievously they are answering it. For through the working of the just law they are now compelled to give to the world the certitude of supermaterial realms which before they prevented from being given; and they are compelled to give this information under conditions of grave danger and injury to themselves. They stood with all their authority in the way of the enlightening of the world. They must now, morbidly and injuriously, transmit that light themselves; no longer pure, but turbid, tarnished, mingled with the gleams of the astral Gehenna, the rubbish-heap in which are disintegrated the waste materials of life. And this turbid and impure light is now offered to their followers, whom they dissuaded from receiving the clear light of truth offered by the masters of wisdom and their agents, a quarter of a century ago. Here, indeed, is another of Time's revenges; and over this whole effort of research we are tempted to write the age-old inscription: "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign."

The essence of Faith (most mysterious of spiritual powers) is a genuine belief in the goodness of God. OCCULT APHORISMS.

THE MYSTERY OF PAIN.

OF all the mysteries of human life the deepest and most baffling is the mystery of pain. For many of us, it constitutes the mystery of life itself, and certainly it is the last we shall fathom, for he who understands it is more than man, and is crossing the threshold of divinity.

The finest and highest types of men are usually those who have found it most difficult of comprehension. Judging the natural world in the light of their own compassion, they stand aghast at the vast amount of misery which a Divine Power or Law permits, knowing that if it were in their own hands they would not suffer it an instant. Thus, thrown back in the highest part of their natures upon such contradictions and inconsistencies, many have, from the best of motives, refused to believe in an overruling Providence or a future existence, and have devoted their lives to the amelioration of present conditions. This is logical and natural; and a ceaseless Why? has risen in all ages from aching hearts and bewildered minds. And still it seems that the Heavens give no answer, and that all the advancement of science, all the progress in art and industry have failed to touch the root of our perplexity. What reply have we to make to this long unanswered question?

There is not much to be said, for words appeal direct to the mind alone, and the mind has no plummet with which to fathom the depths of soul. I doubt not, however, that the true answer is writ large all over creation, but in a hieroglyph unknown to us as yet, since its Rosetta stone remains still undiscovered. Man has come a long way upon the road of evolution, but in comparison with that which lies before him, the space already travelled is as nothing. Could we realize this fact we might find a steadier patience as well as greater hopefulness.

Indications as to the direction in which to look for a solution of our problems never have been lacking, and those of quickened intuition, who have noted these and followed their leading, have evidently found certain satisfaction and elucidations, and have left messages behind, whose purport, however, has often proved as perplexing to the ordinary intelligence as the mystery itself. Nevertheless, let us consider some of these for a few moments, in a spirit of sympathetic inquiry. What may make our task more difficult is that past misconception adds its quota to the fog. In the early days of the Christian Church, for example, men thought they understood the meaning of certain of these symbols and acted upon them with the enthusiasm of young faith, only

to discover later how mistaken they had been; and so the very symbols themselves came to share in the disrepute and ridicule attaching to their misunderstanding.

We must strive to clear ourselves, as far as possible, of previous notions, and permit a fresh breath of rising inspiration to presage the glimmer of dawn. The first statement which seems invariably to stand out from the mass of testimony both because of its startling nature, and also because all agree upon it whatever other differences may exist, is in itself a complete contradiction, no less than this—that pain *is* joy. Few are willing to progress further in a line of investigation whose first pronouncement is in nature and form so absolutely unreasonable. And yet this is the direction we must follow; which the saints, the prophets, the martyrs, the seers of all times and in all religions, have unhesitatingly pointed out.

Let us consider the nature of man. We all agree in its duality, whatever other distinctions we may accept or reject, and this duality expresses itself in a higher and a lower nature, or in one that turns to the good and in one that turns to evil, or the soul and the flesh, as others have named it. These two seem to be in ceaseless opposition and constitute a veritable battleground, whose result, either way, appears to many without meaning. But granting this dual nature, may it not be that all the experiences and emotions of life create equally divergent effects upon either side, and that what is pain for the one is joy for the other? This is what those who have had no experience of spiritual life are unwilling to grant, and yet it is the meaning of the testimony of the saints, given often in highly coloured and extravagant language, or under figures of rhetoric so exaggerated as to appear grotesque to our more sophisticated ears. Nevertheless, hundreds died, and died cheerfully, because of this faith, and the conviction which enables a man to rise above slow torture and rejoice in it, is not one to be placed indifferently aside, no matter what its outer expresion may be.

One thing seems certain; that a complete reversal of all ordinary views of life and happiness must take place before such a state is possible; for the long line of saints all agree in this, that each one of them *chose* suffering, embraced it eagerly, and recommended it as God's choicest gift to man. "Pain is necessary to holiness," writes one. Says another, "Like the cherubim suffering carries God, which is to carry the Light itself . . . the soul which perseveres in her patience is sooner or later clothed with a marvellous power, and ends by becoming unconquerable." This would indicate that pain is the *awakener* and the *initiator* into the higher or spiritual life, the means by which we attain the gifts of the spiritual life; that by its aid we may rid ourselves of that which symbolically we call the "flesh," and so enter a higher state of

consciousness, a plenitude of power and illumination, which gives us the joy of the Blessed.

To-day this divine ecstasy, this joy of pain, is considered morbid, yet all the great teachers have inculcated it by life and doctrine. Are we, I wonder, so much wiser than they? The shadow of the Cross lies athwart human life, and by divine decree ever shall so lie until men accept its meaning. Then they will find it was indeed but a shadow, caused by the brilliance of the light streaming from the Heavenly World. I suppose it is impossible for some kinds of natures to comprehend that which is well known among disciples of certain degrees, that the delight of sacrifice is so great that they must carefully be kept from it, lest they come to do it for the pleasure they find in it, rather than impersonally; and so grow in vice rather than in virtue.

We shall be wise if we can bring ourselves to realize that our point of view is material, that we judge joy and pain by the standards of the "flesh," not by those of the spirit; for we shall then have taken an important step towards a juster appreciation of our difficulty. "We who cry out and complain if God but touch us sharply, how are we to understand when St. John of the Cross tells us that we are to love tribulation more than all good things, and are to be at home in the sufferings of Christ, and that there are souls who would gladly pass through the agonies of death to enter deeper into God?" Yet it is a blessing to know that such desires are possible to man. And if to one man, why not to all? to you and to me? There is an inspiration in such a thought, a sound like the opening of dungeon doors, or a flash from the battlements of Heaven.

May not this be part of our inheritance—the inheritance of the saints in light? part of that wonderful portion of knowledge and power which the gradual processes of time are leading towards; not from one blackness to another, but from glory to glory, prepared for us by a Love and Wisdom far beyond our comprehension? Surely the purposes of God for humanity were trifling if *we* could understand them!

Joy, as we know it here, is a beautiful rainbow thing, composed of a shaft of sunlight falling upon mist, which we can never grasp, over which we have no slightest control, and which any instant may vanish from our fond gaze, never to return. This is no fit object for an immortal soul. Lovely flashes and dreams, we may prize them if we will, as we should, indeed, note and prize each experience life sends us, knowing that each bears some message, and is for our instruction and uplifting.

But let us not call them Joy, that sacred name which conceals the essence of God himself; that symbol of our godlike heritage; that promise, in our longing for it, of endless satisfaction, whose divine nostalgia bears our most precious hope. CAVÉ.

THE UNITY OF RELIGIONS.*

STRICTLY speaking, the title of this paper is a misnomer. We speak more correctly when we say that there is in reality but one Religion—that is, Religion *per se,* or the religious instinct which is part of the root nature of mankind. This instinct, or impulsion towards Religion, is primeval; we find it everywhere coexistent with mankind; as men evolve, it manifests in many beliefs, doctrines, dogmas, creeds, philosophies, symbols, churches, finally flowering into what we call "the Great Religions" of the world, those which at some period of their history have flooded the attentive world with light. But the flower is not the fruit, and Religion has often been found to have its rich fruitage in simple beliefs and trusting hearts which had inclined to no dogmatic or formulated religion, but which had entered into lowly converse with the Father, and had realized the Presence of God. We shall grasp the distinction better when we remember that a man may have no formulated belief whatever, may belong to no church, no society, philosophical or ethical, and may yet be a deeply religious man. The converse is also perfectly possible. We may be placed by our own will in all these centers, and yet may have a minimum of the religious instinct, of the natural Religion, that which leads Man to seek for his own soul and for its true relations with the universe and with spiritual Being. Let us then accept for the moment this distinction between religions and Religion, looking upon our topic in this light, with the additional proviso that the two may be and often are found joined together in the illumined unity of devout minds.

It is Unity which we seek, for it must inhere in Religion—in the religious instinct of Man—as we see when we remember that the essence of Religion, its Alpha and Omega, is that it leads Man away from himself. Religion is One in very truth. It is the aspiration of the human towards the Divine, the outreaching of Man towards that which is higher than himself. The catholicity of this upward trend of the human heart reveals to us the unifying factor; among the multiplicity of creeds, the religious instinct itself is everywhere the same.

If we go back to the beginnings of mankind, so far as history has enabled us to do so, or if we consider what may be called embryonic Man in the savage state, we find in primitive and wholly uncivilized conditions distinct traces of the religious instinct. Historians have told us that no tribe of men has as yet been found without some form or mode

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of Religion, however crude, and (to our eyes at least) unworthy of that name. May we not venture to believe that in a just Balance weighing all the environment and conditions, no spark, however feeble, however defiled by materiality and ignorance, which was yet the faint and intermittant ray put forth by an inchoate mind darkly seeking something higher than itself, would be wholly denied the noble title of Religion? History records periods in which mankind has been as

"An infant crying in the night;
An infant crying for the light
And with no language but a cry."

The cry has arisen from the formless plane of primitive nature; it has been wordless as the flicker of a flame is wordless; yet for the wise, the flame has a voice.

The earliest traces which we find of the religious instinct active in Man enables us to take note of certain points. For example: there seems to be a three-fold basis of Religion which is always found. At the very root of the religious instinct we discover certain essentials. There would seem to be one Law, having this threefold base. The Law is the Law of Love. The moment that we conceive of a Being—or it may be a Something—greater than ourselves, greater than collective mankind as we know it, then almost in the same breath we address ourselves to this Power; we entreat It; we propitiate It; we look upon it as a Giver, having something to bestow and willing—conditionally willing, it may be, but still willing—to fulfil Its function of bestowal. This conception, however overlaid by selfishness and ignorance, is still a far-off recognition of the reign of the Law of Love. This Giver exists to give; that is the function of the Power which primitive Man sees in the storm, the darkness, in the upheaval of Nature as in her most smiling hour, and whether to ban or to bless as he sees it, the fact remains that we have here a dim recognition of the Divine Nature—that it always gives. The heart of Man has never conceived it otherwise. That which is above him has always been the Giver. And this giving, this expansion towards the universe on the part of the Supreme Power, is the evidence of the spiritual nature of the Law of Love as it first dawns upon the untutored mind. That mind has not named the trait; it is left to us, observers of a riper era, to name it. We come to recognize that all races of Men are impelled from within towards Something outside and beyond themselves; Something, it may be, better than themselves, but at all events Something stronger, higher in the scale of Life, richer in power; Something able to reward, to protect, to save or to destroy.

Thus the first manifestation of the religious instinct is the recognition that there *is* Something greater than myself, and from this idea of

Something greater, Something beyond me, I go on to feel that It must be better than I; better, that is, in such form of excellence as I am fitted to recognize. If I be a savage, my ideal may take the shape of a greater strength, a wider power to slay the foe and to exalt the friend: or it may be the fuller license in the share of the spoils of combat and chase which that misshapen ideal is able to confer upon me. Clearly, the first, tentative outreaching of the religious instinct is toward a Greater-than-self, toward an ideal Power which reigns somewhere, somehow, above me, and which I wish to enlist upon my side; whose benefits and protection I desire to claim; with which, in short, I desire to ally myself, desiring it even unto the point of invocation and sacrifice. We must mark this first point well: the wish to ally myself with the Greater-than-I, is the initial step, on the part of Man, toward a recognition of Unity; Unity as between the Greater-than-I and himself, in the first place; and, in the second place, Unity as a desirable—that is an ideal—condition. Overlaid with selfishness, greed and fear as it is, we yet have here the first trembling step of the human soul housed in the depth of the human heart toward a goal that is immortal and eternal. And though this goal be hidden in the icy mists of Time, nevertheless it is a goal, an ideal of such exceeding sweetness, of such undying power, that even its first, feeble flicker in the heart of animal Man has the quality of impelling him to look beyond himself for the fulfilment of that heart's desire. So doing, he has taken the initial step in *spiritual* evolution, and through age after age of increasing enlightenment he will find the essence of the matter to be still the same: only the desire of his heart will be different, ranging the wide, the universal gamut, until at long last he comes to desire singly and solely, the Will of the Father. So that we have here, throughout the life course of a man—or the life course of a human race, if we prefer so to view it—the concept of Unity, of a Unity in diversity, which finally rounds itself to one, clear, spheric Whole. It is in this way that we may see a rudimentary concept of Unity as the earliest base of the religious instinct in Man.

The second side of the threefold base brings us one step further. It is the aspect of Sacrifice.

No sooner do I glimpse the Greater-than-I, than I think I must attract to myself the favor, the attention, the affection of this Power. How shall I achieve this end? How propitiate and please It? Experience has shown me what pleases, what disposes *me* favorably toward others: it is that they shall make sacrifice before me, shall bring offerings unto me. So I hasten to take some of my possessions, or to acquire such and such objects as my labor or my combat or my chase may obtain, and which are known to be pleasing unto the Power, and these I offer up to that Power. Being a savage, steeped in ignorance of all kinds, I *rob*

myself as little as may be in making my sacrifice. But as my consciousness enlarges, as my need widens and deepens and my desire grows imperious, I begin to give of my best, seeking better to please. Later on, we find this impulse fully established and recognized; it is a canon of the law that a man shall give of his best to the Lord God. A few steps further in human evolution, and the sweetest Voice of all declares that the best which I have to give is myself, however unworthy the gift may appear to alien eyes. Do thou come unto me! This is the call which so stirs the heart. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." It is rest for our souls that is offered if we will give ourselves, if we will take upon us that tender yoke.

The savage has unwittingly touched the earliest manifestation of this light in his idea of sacrificial offering. In something the same fashion, the "civilized" man of to-day—no less than primitive humanity —has been known to offer as little as may be to the God of his confession and time. Doubtless this trait of withholding ourself, while lavish in material offerings, will remain cloaked and veiled, a shadow in the shades of human nature until that nature is purged of self. Perhaps the purely human side of our nature, so strangely composite, will always seek how little it can give to God and yet retain His favor, while the very seal of the spiritual nature in us is the willingness—the joyfulness—to yield up all unto the Will of the Father.

Thus this dim idea of Sacrifice, involving and including some far off idea of self-sacrifice, is the second aspect of the threefold spiritual base to which we have referred. Whenever a human being desires excellence, attainment, success, power, there we find, first; self-identification with his ideal, however crude and debased (from a higher standpoint) it may be; and, secondly, that he makes sacrifice for it; the sacrifice of ease, of pleasure, of other tastes; of health, it may be; of time, of sleep, of comfort or of happiness in one or another form. Every man knows, practically, that he must give if he would receive. If he would attain, he must work; he must sacrifice at each point of contact with the incoming power. Even Genius has been defined as an infinite power of taking pains, and assuredly we may descry in the highly sensitized nature of the genius the source of the sacrificial pains he must endure. Is it not a strange thing that this principle, so tacitly recognized in regard to the desirable contents of this world, is so frequently overlooked in respect of spiritual attainment? Yet how clear the Voice. "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it."

The third aspect of the threefold base is Obedience.

One who had deeply studied life, once pointed out that "respect for and obedience to Law" typifies "the subjection of the lower nature to the

higher," adding that the lesson of every Religion worthy of the name, "is that it stands for Obedience." Must not this always be so? Wherever we find recognition of an underlying law, or submission to rule, are we not *in essence* looking at a manifestation of obedience to the nature of Being? Even the small rules of social association convey this teaching; all stand for the subordination of self to wider and more general interests. The savage who worships his fetish, who prays, sacrifices, talks to it, does all this in the belief that he is following out a line of action which is based upon observed rule. He does not consciously reason thus, of course, but still we find that he does one thing and recognizes another as "taboo"; this or that will not please the fetish; such and such actions are traditionally pleasing to it. In a measure he is constrained to some degree of self-control; his observance is not altogether as he would wish, but is conducted as tradition and experience of the ways of the power may advise, or the medicine-men command; they are obeyed as later on we find the priest, the prophet and the seer obeyed. In all these cases obedience is the rule. In the worship of nature spirits, or the gods, we find the same traces. The very seasons put forth their mandates; the stars in their courses are obeyed. Largely viewed, the specific action matters little; what does matter is that Man is acquiring the spiritual quality of Obedience, an essential quality of the soul.

A further and higher trait is there as well for our finding. Just as we see that the gratification of desire or the granting of a prayer is expected to follow on after a sacrifice, so too, at the higher pole of human development we find that renunciation is said to be the forerunner of true happiness; that it is "the soil from which blooms the beautiful flower of Joy." We are thus enabled to follow the evolution of religious ideals from their crude, apparently ignoble beginnings to the aftermath sung by every saint and seer. We find that the spirit which moves in Man moves in him from his earliest dawn, that our human nature closes round a breath of something more divine. This Spirit in Humanity it is which traces out the path to be trodden, and the tracing corresponds to the unfolding of our discernment, and of our powers of attention and obedience to the guidance of that inner light. We are *gradually* led along this path by the Evolutionary Power. Whether we take the case of the individual man as under the Law of Reincarnation; or reject this thought and view the Evolution of the race as a whole, we find the same results. These may be summed up as the instinctive recognition, on the part of human beings of whatever stage of Evolution, of a twofold fact:

First: That happiness is only to be gained by the appeal to something higher than oneself; and that we cannot refuse this interior prompting.

Second: That the only Freedom worthy of the name—the Freedom

to Be—is only found by observance of and obedience to some law, supposed to be founded in the natural order of Being as viewed by us at the time and under our lights.

It does not in the least matter that Man is unable to cognize, or to name and label certain traits in himself. That may be for the historian, or for the intuitive observer of a much later stage of development. It is only as we come to unify that we discern the sweet workings of the law that makes for righteousness and know that Obedience and Sacrifice were with it from the beginning of Time; that in its august balance, Renunciation and Freedom are the same.

II.

We have now seen that primitive man has been led, by the workings of some law within himself, to reach out unconsciously towards certain fundamental realities. In so doing he has all unwittingly become a partaker of the Great Communion; he has entered the age-long Mystery. For he has *begun* to develop his spiritual Consciousness.

The next step of the primitive races has been toward higher forms of Religion than fetishism or the worship of idols. In their place we now get the worship of nature spirits, or of the forces of Nature. In other words, a further development of the idea of the nature of Being, its greatness and power. Also a clearer, a somewhat more sane comprehension of entering into relations with it. Some observation, too, of the laws of Life playing over the face of Nature; glimpses even of a conscious Purposiveness in these laws; some better worship, due to a more advanced ideal. Such a stage is followed, in tentative degrees, by the final emergence of some one among the great Religions, or Philosophies, of mankind. Here we must pause to ask ourselves; by what means is this transition of the religious ideal accomplished?

Men fall naturally into social groups animated by a common necessity, a community of interest, which eventuates in a somewhat uniform religious ideal. This grouping develops—by attrition—those laws or rules of Association which spring from the communal requirements, and without which no social body can maintain itself as an organism. The primary, the imperious demand made by those laws upon each individual of the associated group, is that each shall to some extent subordinate the personal desires to the good of the whole. The ideal of human solidarity, or unity; of sacrifice in order to maintain the cohesion of group or tribe, nation or race, gives rise in time to all human law. He who does not obey the rules enacted for the benefit of the whole, is thrust forth. These laws of organization cannot be escaped; they are the conditions of manifestation and association upon all planes of Life. There is, of course, continual oscillation; there is resistance and submergence;

there is individual gain and loss. Men are led by human affections and instincts to group themselves together; they are led by human passions and desires to struggle, one against the other: there is the push and the pull, the attraction and the repulsion; the higher self, agent of the associated whole; the lower self, separatist and divider. Through this attrition and oscillation Man develops qualities of sympathy, of fraternity, of human understanding; he has now a rudimentary self-identification with the social body, some faint intuition of community of religious ideal, of some order of faith and hope shared by his fellow men. He joys and suffers, he gives and takes, he rises and falls; he is in travail with the soul. Thus, by imperceptible advances but with a majestic continuity does the Law of Love work with its human children (guided by who shall say what Divine Beings behind the veil of Nature?), and a very precious attribute is seen to emerge. The moral Consciousness of Man arises slowly from the enveloping darkness of unaided Nature, and under the impulsion of the Spirit of Humanity, his ethical ideals are born. The first step has been made towards the evolution of the Divine Consciousness in him; the hammer of a titanic Spirit is beating fire from the iron of his life.

We now see that the laws of Association, like the fundamental basis of Religion, stand for Unity, and make for:

Sacrifice (of the unit to the whole).

Obedience (to the best interests of that whole, whether in social or religious ideal).

Freedom (under such laws as are enacted for the common good).

The original ideal of Unity is now more concrete, more developed. The religious instinct, expanding from within; the attrition of Association acting from without towards the center of his life, play upon his Consciousness, and to the original concept of a Greater-than-I, Man adds the further ideal of a Dearer-than-Myself: he will now yield up his desire-life, to some extent at least, for the communal life and the general welfare. He does this because he has made a *conscious* discovery. The savage knew it only as the animals know—with his instinct—but now Man *consciously* recognizes that, for him, life has no sweetness without the presence of his fellow men. Human Consciousness has put forth a blossom. How beautifully Sabatier puts it: "In every consciousness is a new principle of unification, the germ of an order grander and more beautiful than the material order which is maintained by physical law." This principle of unification it is which underlies the religious instinct, urging Man towards the formation of one ideal after another, subordinating each new mode of Thought to the requirements of the Spirit of Humanity. "It is a fact that the moral consciousness does not appear at the beginning of evolution, nor does it at any moment

burst suddenly into being all luminous and perfect," says Sabatier. This point once reached, the unfolding of religious ideals presses rapidly forward; the ordered processional of the great Religions begins.

It has been said that of all wars the religious war is the most bitter. This may well be: fanaticism has a shrewd flavor of wormwood and gall. The sign and seal of the religious instinct at a certain stage of its development—narrow but intensely pronounced—is intolerance of any religious ideal but its own. The difference between creeds is that which at this stage is most insisted upon, is that which is at once prized and most condemned: there is a sharp reaction away from the ideal of Unity. This is but a stage of progress; the pendulum will next swing the other way; it is the earlier question of oscillation and attrition. Man needs but to look a little below the surface of creeds to see that one Religion arises out of another, that they follow one upon another as wave follows wave upon the sea. Religions evolve, and alter in evolving; there are traits common to them all; each is at once the vehicle and the educator of some given type of human mind. Indeed it is easier to point out similitudes than to emphasize differences, once our minds are attuned to this sweeter song.

III.

The classifications of Religions, and the order of their succession is the task of the scholar, a task so wide that even a sketch of it looms far beyond the limits of this paper. But we may glance at the leading tenets of a few of the better known Religions in search of a unifying thread—shall we say a "thread soul"?

In Nature worship we have an acknowledgment of the modes or manifestations of Life—Being. As the idea of human relations with the Supreme Power takes the field, we get the thought of the growth of the soul, or Animism. Spiritism brings us to the worship of souls that were human and have departed from the plane of visibility. In Polytheism the object of worship is the individual soul, now become divine. In Dualism as in Monism we have a definition, in terms of human thought, of the nature of the Divine. So we may see that we never get away from the nature of Being, and the relations of the human soul to that nature.

Approaching the Great Religions we do not find that the case has changed. The object of all religious thought is to make manifest the inner loveliness hidden in the Divine Life, as a man draws forth a statue from the stone. India gives us a colossal conception of Unity—the One Self: embraced in this fundamental idea are:

The Immortality of the soul.

Reincarnation.

The identity of all selves with the One Self.

The Law of cause and effect (Karma).

That the destiny of Man is Deliverance, final and complete.

Within this field further teachings and philosophies arise, but over all is the One Self.

Then we have the golden Age of Greece, when sages builded into their philosophies some murmur of the universal song. Thales, Orpheus, Plato, Socrates, Pythagoras, Iamblicus, Plotinus—to count these names, each expressive of a different ideal of the ordered sequence of Being, is like the counting of gems strung on a silver cord. Pythagoras taught the immortality and pre-existence of the soul, its reincarnation also; the perfectibility of Man as well, and the Brotherhood of the three degrees of Becoming, which are said to have embraced:

The *Akoustikoi,* or hearers; those who heard in silence the teaching of the master.

The *Mathematikoi;* those who had as their task the training of the mind.

The *Phusikoi,* or those fitted to examine into the nature of the world and of Being.

The Stoics followed with Epictetus; then the mystical theology and the restoration of Platonism by Ammonias Sakkas, the son of Christian parents of an humble walk of life: he was a laborer, but abandoned his occupation and his Christianity in order to promulgate his philosophy. With the passing of his pupil, Plotinus, passed the "last light of Greece," about A. D. 204. A modern writer says: "The whole purpose of the doctrines of Plotinus was to direct men towards the blessed life, a kingdom of heaven attainable by them. Having a faith in the illimitable destiny of the human Soul, he directed all his energies towards showing man how to attain a knowledge of God, union with the Divine, called by him the Contemplative Life. True, there were other lives—the political life, the moral life—but these had no rationale but as steps in a ladder leading to the highest." The ideas of Ammonias Sakkas and Plotinus have a most familiar ring to Christian ears. In this we find the teaching of the "kingdom of heaven," and the allusion to the political life being other, reminds us of rendering to Cæsar "that which is Cæsar's, to God, that which is God's." The teaching of Reincarnation, indubitably held by some among the early Fathers of the Christian Church, is here as well, side by side with the culminating thought that union with the Father is to be sought. ("Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect.") These men were inspired with the melody and the simplicity which sit at the heart of Life. It is much the same inspiration as that which speaks to us from the Christian Gospels. Greece as a whole seems to stand for a splendid Freedom, like the glad beauty compelled from the rock—be it lovely form or fiery spark—that Free-

dom which Epictetus found when he was dragged through the streets in chains.

In ancient Egypt there were also several forms of Religion, great learning, sublime conceptions. Petrie says, "Once firmly established in Rome, the spread of Imperial power carried her" (Egypt's) "worship over the world; emperors became her priests, and the humble centurion in remote camps honored her in the wilds of France, Germany, Yorkshire, or the Sahara." Egypt had her worship of the Queen of Heaven and her Son, until the spread of Christianity altered their attributes but not their nature. The influence of Egypt in the Trinitarian dispute is worthy of comment. From our immediate point of view, the specialization of the religious influence of Egypt would appear to be Obedience. Law, Order and the Will of the Gods stand forth with marked emphasis.

The latest born of the Great Religions—the Mohammedan—"under the impulse of a great and dominating idea, within the space of eighty years from its birth, had spread from the Indus to the Tagus, from the Volga to the Arabian Sea," says Hare. We find many of our own ideas in the Religion of Islam: its cardinal principle is said to be a belief in the Unity, and in the power, mercy and supreme love of the Creator; God is omnipresent and the will of Man is free. Judge Ameer Ali thus quotes its conception of Evolution, as given by an Islamic poet. "Dying from the inorganic we developed into the vegetable kingdom. Dying from the vegetable we rose to the animal. And leaving the animal we became men. Then why should we fear that death will lower us? The next transition will make us angels. From angels we shall rise and become what no mind can conceive; we shall merge in infinity as in the beginning. Have we not been told: 'All of us will return unto Him'"? (Koran.) The youngest Religion, like the most ancient, has Unity as its theme.

Of Persia, China, Japan, we understand less, but here and there our mist is penetrated by the soft shining of their star. Over the eternal snows which wall Thibet away from the world, come stealing whispers of truths immemorial, and their icy fastnesses seem to the inner ear of thought to obey the mandate: "Oh, ye Frost and Cold. Oh, ye Ice and Snow, bless ye the Lord: praise Him and magnify Him forever." At the apex of Time as we know it stands the figure of that Buddha whom men call "the Light of Asia," he whose rapt contemplation has a silent influence upon our western world to-day. Thus by degrees our thought returns upon itself, remembering One who came telling of the spirit of Love more clearly than any other; He who taught of the joyful soul of self-sacrifice, and whose "greater love" laid down his human life for foe as well as friend.

Comparison of our Christian ideals with those of other lands and eras is of the deepest benefit, showing the similarities and the variations

of the universal theme. It is a common error, not with the student or the philosopher, but with people in general, to think of Religions as though each were a rigidly defined creed, standing alone, aloof, and fixed to all time. More exact thought, though it skim but the surface of history, shows us that all Religions have evolved and taken on form after form: there is reincarnation for Religions. A group of Italian writers have recently told us that our Christian Religion was "first Judaic, then Pauline, then Hellenic, then universal." In his *Penetration of Arabia* Hogarth tells us: "Remember that, not only as the head and fount of pure Semitism the Arabs originated Judaism and largely determined its character and that of Christianity, but also the expansion of the Arabian conception of the relations of man to God and man to man (the Arabian social system in a word) is still proceeding faster and further than any other propagandism." Another writer shows us that the ancient Scandinavian Religion exhibited correspondences to the various Aryan Religions. The briefest glance at these vast systems, these names glorious with the nimbus of Thought, must make the sectarian pause. He can no longer regard his own Religion—be it what it may—as something which exists by itself and owes no debt to any. Trace back a few centuries of the flight of Time, Oh! would-be dogmatist, and see where your church or your creed stood then, 'ere you dogmatize as to your favorite crystalization of its teaching. For we see that when a Religion reaches its high-water mark, rebels arise within it, much in the same way as segregations of unit-cells split up in the human body, and out of the protests of iconoclasts a new aspect of the doctrine comes forward as the latest and most efficacious form of belief. In our own day we have witnessed the rise of the "new Theology," which is the old, as Archdeacon Wilberforce, with others, points out. Nor can we be ignorant of the birth data of our Protestant form of Christianity; its name is its registration. The study of Comparative Theology, coming more and more into favor, has done us service in its comments upon the similarities between the religious ideals and symbols of Mankind. Although in this brief space it is not possible even to allude to them, yet it is one of the signs of our times that but few people will not know where to look for them, since they are even to be found in popular handbooks.

We come thus to see that we are really spectators, witnesses; we are looking on at the evolution of Religions and the religious Ideal. We perceive that there are, at different eras and in different nations, varying concepts of the nature of Being. These concepts wax and wane, rise and fall; now one is predominant, now another; the new vision becomes the old, is buried, and then again arises as newly conceived. Religions develop; the message of the Founder is expounded and expanded by his followers. In the passage of Time churches build up their creeds; can divine authority be claimed for each addition, made as it is through human

beings? Reason and intuition join hands in revolt at the idea. The human mind, the wonder-spinner, has woven all these webs, extruding them out of its own texture. The prophet, the seer, the saintly revealer are succeeded by the priesthood, by authority incarnate and rigid; then the reformer comes, breaking the iron mould, and the religious spirit of the Movement pours itself out along some other channel of Consciousness. It would seem as if human Consciousness realized itself and its relations to Being, up to a certain point in a given Religion; then, saturated with experience in that direction, it seeks further self-expression and self-realization in some other ideal. Thus creeds are builded, and across the centuries we hear the muffled strokes of the mallet of the builders. Rock foundation, stately edifice, thus far fulfilling the vision of the Founder; but subsequent occupants have subdivided the interior into numerous rigid and non-essential compartments, from whose darkened "ancient lights" no perspective is visible and wherein all sense of proportion is lost, yet the original ideal is comparable to those fair and spacious mosques of Islam, shining jewels of architecture all glorious without and within, but containing nothing but the worshipper and his prayer, lest material objects should divert his mind from the contemplation of the Unity.

What, then, is the Unity underlying all Religions? Is it not this—that each offers to us some new aspect of the Supreme Power, and of the relation between that Power and the soul of Man? Each treats of the nature of Being. Each is an effort towards a realization of that nature, Divine and Eternal. The God—Ideal—that is the underlying Unity; the preoccupation of the religious instinct is with That, and with Its relations with Man. As the wave of religious experience broadens, we find men examining the problems of Religion now from this aspect, now from that; now dealing with the nature and attributes of the Deity, now with the will and nature of Man. The Pantheist, the Monist, the Theist, the Vedantin, the Mohammedan, the Christian, be he roman, anglican or non-conformist; be he follower of the latest mode in Religion, or devoutly minded man of no creed at all—all these are viewing the one problem from the particular point of view to which their minds are most open at the time; each one of us is satisfying some need of his nature, is working at his own angle of the world-problem. So each is wise if he takes the key of his own Religion and strives to find the Truth underlying that particular form provided for him in first instance by his training and environment. If he be not an abject thinker he must come to see that a creed is of manifest insignificance before the spirit by which it is ensouled. Each Religion is, as it were, an ark containing a living, spiritual seed; genuflections to the ark obstruct our perception of the seed. Not the dogma but the truths of Being underlying that dogma are the rightful food of the soul within us. Humanity must be

studied in the collective sense if we would come to any just appreciation of religious phenomena and experience. Not for the student is a mind which, like an oyster, closes around the new substance and shuts out the magnificent surges of the ocean of Life. We must sweeten with tolerance and with sympathy that harsh, separative impulse. He who has once directed his thoughts to the conception of an Evolutionary Purpose ruling the religious development of Man can never again wear the fetter of a dogma nor entangle himself in the net of credal obligation. In the Great Teachers of Humanity he sees Avatar after Avatar of the Spirit Divine, leading men from stage to stage of religious experience and ideals, holding ever before the human heart a light of the Spirit after which the mere mind pants as the hart panteth for the water-brooks —and pants in vain. It is as we come to realize that we need not define too closely; that not learning but doing—*being;* living the life—is that which shall make us able to be called the "friends" of the Master. The Spirit to which the heart of Man serves as altar is guiding each one, by a different path, it may be, but to the same sublime goal.

In saying this we are not saying that the Truth is not with the churches. By no means. Each church is directly concerned with one or more aspects of Truth, however overlaid. The *essence* of all Religions is identically spiritual; they are all fragmentary truths, portions of the Truth which can never be known in its fullness until our human Consciousness more largely apprehends the Reality of Being. As the spiritual Consciousness of Man widens and deepens, more and more of the Truth will the temples of his faith enshrine. Our present ideals are based upon erroneous concepts of the universe and of the Life which pulses through it. But there is at the present time a Spirit moving through the churches, throwing wide many a long closed door. It is the same Spirit of Truth which reveals itself to Man—by infinitely delicate and intimate advances —within his own soul. Within all Religions, deeper than all non-essential forms and formulæ we feel the breath of the Mysteries: always there have been grades of the faithful, and only those fitted by purification and training of mind and heart have been permitted (with the permit of their own inner power) to study the unveiled Truth. Such have drawn nearer to the Greater Self; in finding that, the lesser self has become responsive to the pulsations of a grander orbit of Being. The Saints have found that the out-breathing of the Greater Self in the human heart proclaims the unity and sanctity of Life; it proclaims that Life permeated at every point by the Divine Will divinely working—that same Will whose shadow the savage saw and worshipped after his fashion, and to which we too, each in his own fashion, do unconsciously turn. Around the Divine Life our natures revolve, as worlds around their central sun; only that which the Saints have done in joyful accord, we do as yet in struggle and pain, our circulation impeded, our revolu-

tions incomplete. Religion and Life are one. It is indeed the Spirit of Divine Life which urges forward the evolution of the human soul. This guidance being our inheritance, we can the better understand why it has been said: "There is a natural melody, an obscure fount, in every human heart. It may be hidden over and utterly concealed and silenced—but it is there. At the very base of your nature you will find faith, hope and love."

Faith; in our soul and its immortal destiny. Hope; in the nature of Being, its Justice and Compassion. Love; love of the Father towards us poor prodigals; reciprocal love on our part for Him. Life is indeed holy: the deeper we go the holier it must become, since it contains such actualities as these. Along what obscure channels may not the ecstatic heart pour its stream of prayer and praise? Are the channels defiled? This pure stream will cleanse them. Are they narrow? This current will widen them. They are lowly, but the presence of Faith exalts them. Happy are we who live at a time when the Genius of Christianity is awakening the western world.

It is to the Spirit of Truth in all Religions and within all varieties of religious experience that the theosophist will turn; it is that which he is concerned to unveil in all modes of Thought, religious or otherwise. In fact, all Life being holy, all Thought should be religious in the sense that it should be reverent and sincere. Hence the true theosophist is he who endeavors sincerely, reverently and unremittingly to demonstrate on all sides and by the broad catholicity of his sympathy that the Theosophical Society exists—not for the promulgation of a creed, but for the preservation of a spiritual atmosphere. That atmosphere St. Paul has described for us in that pearl among sermons, his Epistle upon Charity. Charity, as he explains it, is the forerunner and prophet of Unity. It is by this light that the Unity of Religions is comprehended.

J. W. L. KEIGHTLEY.

If ye love *aught, ye have it: the loving is the having.*
If ye aspire, ye attain; aspiration is *the Way.*

OCCULT APHORISMS.

THE RELIGION OF THE WILL.*

THE WILL IN THE BODY.

II. Continuity of Life.

HUNGER, the search for food, sends the creatures roaming forth through the world. Hunger has driven them forward through form after form to every perfection of development. It is still the hunger for the highest that is the lever and spur of all spiritual life. But let us consider for awhile the mere hunger of the body. That hunger arises because tissue is used up, and the loss must be made good. So the sense of something lacking drives the creature forth. Of course there might well be a being in which there is little or no waste of tissue; a rock, for example, which, in its fine stability and peace, is free from all restlessness and need. But to get that freedom, some of the essentials of life must be foregone; and if these essentials of life are present there will be movement, there will be change, there will be loss, and so there must be the repair of loss.

Of course there might well be a creature, a form of life, in which the loss could be exactly replaced by new tissues built up from food. And such a creature would be immortal. In truth, this immortal, self-repairing creature is the earliest form of life, and at one time, seemingly, was the only form of life. Immortality is the normal and original condition of life. Death is the later and secondary condition. The early life-forms, the creatures of a single cell of colorless jelly, knew no death, unless by accident. They lived forever; and in fact it may be said that the original unicellular creatures which were living a billion years ago, are living still. They have been wearing and repairing, wearing and repairing, eternally; and there is no reason why this condition of things should not go on forever; no reason, that is, in the nature of these unicellular organisms.

The law of life for these little immortals is very wonderful. Though they have no death, yet in a certain sense they have birth. But the peculiarity of the thing is, that you cannot tell which is the parent and which the child. For the plan works thus: the tiny jelly-speck in its ceaseless forward movement through the water, gathers ever new food, new building stuff, to repair the waste in its pliable little body. And the gain seems to go faster than the loss, through some law as miraculous as all else in life. So after awhile the little creature is twice as large as before, and can divide into two like creature, each in every way as

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good as the first. The little round creatures divides by gradually assuming a dumb-bell form, and then the dumb-bell comes apart, and the two new creatures start each on its own way, to go through a like process everlastingly. Now it is impossible to say that, of the two new creatures, one is more original than the other; or that one is parent, and the other child. Both are the same age; they are twins. So that, after this dividing process has gone on for a thousand generations, each one of the resultant myriads on myriads of beings is, in a certain sense, the original creature; has in him something of the original fund of substance to which he has simply been adding, with wise thrift and husbandry. Hence every one of these beings goes back to the beginning, and is immortal.

Immortality is thus the original law and condition of life; and it is one of the superb thoughts of philosophy that death, so far from being an original disability and doom, has really been developed by life, for life's ends. Death is a means for the greater perfecting of life. For it is clear that the original process of endless division of a one-celled being has no great possibilities. That kind of multiplication would be quite useless later on. If one pulled a man apart, or a horse, the halves would not be good for much, even though we have most of our parts in pairs, and might conceivably make up shortage, as the lobster replaces a lost claw. But after a thousand pullings apart, one would not be good for much. So it is infinitely better to make a new start every little while, with a brand new creature, perfect in every detail, and not mutilated by wear and tear. And there is the added gain, that this new creature, under the driving power of the miraculous law of evolution, is quite likely to be an improvement on what went before. So death and rebirth are necessary, if we would have any extended development of life, any rise from lower to ever higher forms.

Thus life brought death to aid in the everlasting work. And death has as its companion rebirth, the birth of a new creature, to take the place of that which passes away. In some cases, as in some butterflies, death and birth are so closely linked, that, as soon as the parent has produced the eggs for the new generation, it is at once enfolded by death. It has lived to produce new being; having done so, it dies.

There are many ways in which this replacing takes place. The ruling principle, once we get away from the primal halving process, seems to be, to keep the race as rich as possible by continual remixing of all its elements. And this mixing takes place through the union of pairs. One could hardly say, antecedently, that the union of two is a more probable source of new life than the union of three, or five, or seven, or any other number; but such is the general rule, though there are striking

exceptions; as among the bees, where many males unite with one queen. But the pair seems the normal mode, just as dividing into halves seems to be normal, rather than into thirds or quarters.

In early forms of life, marriage is a much older institution than direct sex union. By marriage, I mean the association of a pair, a male and female, in the common interest and common activity of rearing young. Among the fishes, for example, the salmon, the male comes up stream first, and forms a kind of nest in the shallows, where pebbles and sand offer tempting building lots; then comes the pairing, for association and mutual help in the care of young. Then the eggs are deposited by the female in the nest, and later the fertilizing element is added by the male. So that pairing for the rearing of young is an older institution than direct sex union. And among the sticklebacks, for instance, this domestic economy reaches high developments, since very elaborate and charming little house-nests are built by the males for their little wives, and a good deal of devotion and care is shown, though there is, of course, no direct sex union at all. Association of the pair for mutual help is the older institution; direct sex union is the younger.

Let us skip several stages of life, such as that of the virtuous toad, who winds the eggs of the family about his body for safety, until they are hatched out, and let us come on to those forms of life which are more like our own, such as the higher mammals, the creatures which feed their young on milk. Here we find certain marked principles governing marriage, certain wonderful laws ruling the continuation of race.

Broadly speaking, the entire order of mammalian animals living under natural conditions are sexual only for a few weeks in the year. During the rest of the year they are to all intents and purposes sexless; and in a great many cases the sexes live apart, and see practically nothing of each other except for a few weeks in spring time. The reason why spring is the favorite breeding time seems to be that, during the months when all nature is bursting forth into new life after the sleep and silence of winter, every form of food is more abundant, so that the problem of feeding a family is then most easily solved. If the young are brought into life in the middle of spring, both they and their parents are given the best chance; the search for food, inevitable and ceaseless, then sits lightly on them, and prosperity and well-being are fairly within reach.

Then, as the formation of the young animal before birth takes some time, some months even, in the higher forms, the pairing time must be set back an equal number of months, and the pairing must take place at that interval before the fat months of spring, or whatever season brings the best supply of food for that creature. These are the general principles; wherever they are worked out in detail, they are found to work in the same marvelous way as everything else in the perpetual miracle of life.

The seals are a good illustration, for example the fur-seals of the North Pacific. For a short time each year, they come ashore in vast multitudes, to breed, gathering along the strands of the Pribylov islands for miles and miles, a huge prostrate army. The islands are wrapt in chill and mantling fogs, and hid in these the seals have comparative safety from enemies. There their young are brought forth; there the future young are engendered; and then, after the white-furred little baby seals have shed their first coats, and, most unwillingly, have been taught to swim, the whole vast herds put off to sea again, and roam throughout the boundless Pacific wastes. For the next ten months, as far as union is concerned, they are sexless. They forget about sex completely, and each individual busies himself or herself with the search for food.

This is simply the type of what is general throughout the higher forms of animals life. And the great majority of animals are superior to the seals in one important particular. For the seals are polygamous, while as we ascend higher in life, monogamy becomes more and more the rule. Thus all the martial animals, lions, tigers, wolves, bears, are monogamous; as are nine-tenths of the birds and all the higher monkeys and apes, our kindred. Not only is this so, but a very large proportion of these higher creatures are mated for life, and are full of the most real and ardent fidelity. There seems to be a general feeling, since Darwin's day, that the gorilla and the orang-outan are discreditable kin, poor relations whom it is best to forget. On the contrary, we are a discredit to them.

Take the ordinary housekeeping of the higher apes. The father, with careful and far-sighted industry, builds a snug home among the branches of some lofty Bornean tree, and there, after due courtship, esconces his wife, and, in due time, their offspring. Then, with touching loyalty, he himself descends the tree and sleeps on the ground, ready to fight any foe who may try to climb up and molest his family. And these higher apes are strictly monogamous, and are mated for life. Their mutual devotion is more than human. There are brutes who consider themselves the superiors of these blameless tree-folk, and who go out to their leafy homes and shoot them in the interest of science; and they tell us that, when they have shot the husband of such a pair, the wife is distracted, and lingers about heart-broken, so that it is quite easy to kill her too. And when they have killed the wife of such a couple, her mate will fight to the death to avenge her. There is something divine in the animals; and such stories as these remind us that there is something more than the animal in man, there is something devilish.

This fidelity among animals is well known to most races of mankind. There is a tale of a polygamous Sinhalese, who, being converted, was told that he must restrict his conjugal arrangements. "What?" he

cried, with indignation, "only one wife, for a lifetime? Just like the Wanderoo monkeys!" And the Chinese, in their marriage ceremony, pay special tribute to the goose, which is by nature strictly monogamous, and mates for a whole lifetime. Birds, indeed, furnish examples of the greatest beauty in marital things. Nine-tenths of all the species of birds the world over are monogamous, and in very many cases it is known that they mate for life. With pigeons, this is notably the case; so that, once a pair of pigeons are mated, they may be added to an aviary containing many other pairs, without the least fear of the formation of other unions, and without any likelihood of cross-breeding. And the little parakeets we call love-birds really merit their name. When either the husband or the wife of such a little couple dies, the other will droop and fade, and genuinely die of love. Such lessons does Nature offer to the higher animals.

To sum up: By far the greater number of animals, and all the more important forms, including those which are nearest ourselves, come under certain broad and clear principles with regard to sex, to reproduction, to the continuation of the race to which they belong. These principles may be stated as follows:

The first principle is sacrifice. To take the very earliest form, the one-celled organism; reproduction means literally a tearing in halves of the living body, a loss of the half of life. It is true that this is later made up for; but that is true of all sacrifices, yet it does not make the sacrifice the less real. Sacrifice rules over reproduction through all later stages. Every animal, during the period when the young are being nurtured, is peculiarly vulnerable, peculiarly open to attack from its enemies. In general there is great loss of life at this very period and for this cause, and the great majority of animal parents will fight to the death for their offspring. We may go even behind that, and say that the very gestation, the very engendering of the young, in every case represents a definite loss of a part of life, and so a definite sacrifice.

The second principle is faith. This sacrifice is made in obedience to an implicit faith, an inherent certainty, an immediately acting force, which commands instant obedience, and which, in every case, compels the individual to transcend itself in the interest of others, in the interest of the coming generation, in the interest of the continuance of the race. We saw that there is a quite definite sacrifice in the search for food; the wolf must shake himself and rise from his lair; the rooks must flap their wings and scatter abroad, with much cawing, from the rookery; the laborer must rise from his well-warmed bed and struggle through the twilight, if they are to preserve their lives. A definite sacrifice is made through a definite effort; and this effort in each case requires a definite exercise of will, which we could perfectly well refuse to make. Every morning, when we rise, we realize that sacrifice, that definite exercise of will.

In the same way, the continuance of the race involves a definite sacrifice, through effort, through the exercise of the will. And now the sacrifice is made no longer for ourselves, but for others, and for others yet unborn. This is why I say that the second principle in propagation, in the continuance of the race, is faith. And it is a faith which runs as a warp through the whole host of living things, a magnificent volume of faith, perpetually active, perpetually effective.

The third principle, when we rise above the very simplest forms, is love. We saw that the institution of marriage, of association and co-operation for the nurture of young, is older than direct sex union, and must have existed for ages, for millions of years, before direct sex union came into being. And this older institution is still the rule among myriads of living forms. Then, as the later and younger institution, we get direct union of the sexes. But the larger and older element of love survives and dominates. Love is the real thing. Direct sex union is the incident, the means. And infinitely touching do we find the devotion, the sacrifice, in innumerable forms of life. Charles Kingsley once said that, when we see all the devotion and care of a pair of mated birds, we are tempted to say that there is much of the animal in human mating. We should rather say, he tells us, that there is much that is human in the animal. I should prefer to say there is something older and more august in both, there is unselfish love, which is divine.

The fourth principle which we find everywhere in natural animal life is effectiveness. Where direct sex union takes place, it takes place in order that the race may be continued. It is productive. It is fertile. And, as we saw, when that purpose has been fulfilled, both male and female become practically sexless; both forget all about sex, so far as sex union is concerned, though in very many cases they are still associated in the care, the education and feeding of the young. But except for the few days of the actual mating time, they quite forget and put aside the sense of sex, and both male and female engage in the search for food on perfectly equal terms, practically as sexless animals.

There is something infinitely clean and wholesome in this, Nature's real arrangement of sex; and when we add our fifth great principle, fidelity, we see the perfect morality of unfallen animal life. For, as we saw, a majority of all the best forms are monogamous, and not in a loose or nominal way, but strictly, definitely, cleanly. Where polygamy prevails, we almost always find that it is attended by the production of splendid and dominant males, like the bison, the game-cock, the huge-chested sea-lion; in every case the male being very much larger physically than the female. These dominant males become leaders and generals of a complex society, with its own laws, its own advantages for development. But in every such case the male is distinguished by immensely greater physical force.

Monogamy is, however, the higher form, and that much more widely prevailing among the higher types of animal life; and, as we have seen, it has been demonstrated that, in very many cases, the mating is for life, and is full of a very real and genuine devotion and love. And at all points it is consecrated by sacrifice, the "struggle for the lives of others," as a great scientist and mystic has said.

We have, therefore, sacrifice, faith, love, effectiveness and fidelity as the great principles actually ruling the higher forms of animal life, in this vital matter of race continuance. And we find this splendid sum of moral force bent toward an object well worthy of it; the securing of everlasting life. And not only everlasting life, for the one-celled creatures had that already, but everlasting growth, everlasting ascent from lower to higher forms. It was to this end of everlasting ascent to the higher, that production by halving gave way to production by birth, the forming of a new creature; and its means are sacrifice, faith, love, effectiveness and fidelity.

Let us for a moment picture the sex relations of mankind as they would be, if the pure arrangement of nature were carried out; as they would be, for example, if they exactly duplicated the marriage relations of man's nearest kin on the animal side, our despised cousins the anthropoid apes.

There would, no doubt, be a pairing season, which would be fixed by measuring back the period of gestation of ten lunar months from the season at which it would be most advantageous for our race to bring forth and nurture offspring. This advantageous time for motherhood might well be the middle of spring. In warmer countries, where we might well imagine the earlier races of men to dwell, there is abundance of food in spring; in India, for example, the mangoes ripen in May. And since February is the month of flowers in India, and especially the month when the great flowering forest trees flame forth in a colored cloud of beauty, there must be abundance of tree-fruits of all kinds ripe and fit for food by April. We may surmise, perhaps, that, if the pure conditions of animal nature prevailed for mankind, the mating season would be ten lunar months before that, let us say in August. If Tennyson were right in saying that in Spring, when a brighter crimson comes upon the robin's breast, the young man's fancy also turns to thoughts of love, then babies should be born at midwinter. But this could hardly be an advantage.

Let us say then, that the natural mating season of the animal man might well be in August. And, did the laws of our kindred the anthropoids rule us also, these matings would be strictly in pairs, strictly monogamous, and they would be matings for life. Further, the union of the sexes would be for offspring, and would be fertile; and immediately after this brief period, both male and female would become to

all intents and purposes sexless, so far as sex union is concerned, forgetting entirely their difference of sex, and engaging in the search for food side by side, on perfectly equal terms. The association of each pair would continue, with real and deep devotion none the worse because it found expression in deed rather than word, through the period of gestation; and meanwhile the husband—for these faithful anthropoid unions for life well merit the use of the best words—the husband would have prepared a safe and snug dwelling for his wife and her future child. With utmost fidelity, after the baby's painless and wholesome arrival, the husband would pack mother and infant safely in their cosy house, and then, self-forgetting, would betake himself to the threshold, sleeping in the doorway through the watches of the night as a courageous guardian of his home. And during all this period of gestation, and during the early nurture of the infant, our imagined animal man and his wife would live together forgetting sex, without sex union, though with very real mutual help and devotion. This is what would prevail, were man a natural animal. This is what actually does prevail among man's nearest kin in the animal world. Pure, clean unions, fertile, faithful, lasting for the lifetime of the pair; and, during the greater part of the year, during all but a few days, in fact, a complete cessation of sex feeling, except so far as the nurture of the young and mutual help went.

This is what the sex history of mankind might be, were man a natural animal. I am not going to complete the contrast by describing what mankind's sex history actually is. But it will instantly be perceived that, as compared with other animals, man is extremely corrupt. Sin and suffering, the eternal twins, fill a large part of the picture which I leave unpainted: sin and suffering and enduring shame. There is something more than pure animal life in man; there is something which brings this sin and shame. But there is also the divine, of which the devilish is the perversion, and which is destined to purge away corruption and restore full divinity.

Yet even in human life with all its corruption and abuse, there is much that is divine in the birth and nurture of children; and there is the perpetual message of divinity in childhood itself, eternal type of the kingdom of heaven. Even by devious ways the divine creative force attains its ends; even through shame and suffering, the human race is perpetuated, continuity is secured, the possibility of perpetual progress to higher and higher forms of conscious life is assured by the perpetual incarnation of life in the new creature, the new generation.

So that, for this great and splendid manifestation of the Will, we may include humanity in the total of animal life. We may say that here, as in the search for food, we know, by our own knowledge, that there is the definite determination, the definite exercise of the will; or rather, a ceaseless succession of defined efforts of will covering the whole nur-

ture of offspring, the whole long and glorious struggle for the lives of others. And this definite exercise of will, including all animal life, makes a vast total of conscious moral force, directed to ideal ends, in sacrifice, faith, fidelity, love. Its result is everlasting life, everlasting progress to higher forms of conscious life. And we are justified in considering this tremendous sum of moral force, this firm and beneficent volume of creative will, as one of the great forces of the universe; a manifestation, indeed, of the one great force of the universe.

CHARLES JOHNSTON.

Man is a spiritual being, placed in the midst of a material world. He must subdue this matter, bending it to his needs and uses—which are those of service. *But he shall not forget the region whence he sprang —that he stands rooted in Eternity.* BOOK OF ITEMS.

MYSTICISM.

THE rapidly increasing interest in everything that concerns the spiritual life, which is apparent in all directions, makes unnecessary any apology for a study of the mystical element in religion and what it stands for. The object of this paper is to call attention to the fact that many of the best and holiest people who ever lived have stated definitely and positively that it is possible for man to have direct, fully conscious, personal communication with God, or with a Spiritual Intelligence which they may or may not call God, depending upon their religious creed.

This stupendous fact has not received the attention it deserves. Before such an idea all our multifarious and multiplying religious discussions sink into insignificance. Once such a possibility is granted there would be no other religious phenomena worth investigating, for it would be all inclusive. The science of religion would resolve itself into the investigation of this ideal; church services would be confined to the means for encouraging it; ethics would be an expression of the laws governing the conditions leading to such communion; and at the most, creeds would be but differing methods for reaching the final goal.

In fact, such an idea is so bewildering that it is difficult to grasp, and it is almost impossible to realize that it is not based on the statement of some neurotic mystic, but upon the united testimony of all the great saints, prophets and seers who have ever lived.

It is the basis of all of Christ's teaching, for the inference from the entire record of His sayings is that you must go within for your revelation of God's will. To His disciples He gave specific promise that when needed He would give them inspiration and directions. Nor must we overlook the fact that in His day, the possibility of speech face to face with God was an essential part of the Jewish religion; was the basis of the teachings of the Prophets, and was a natural part of everyone's consciousness. It was like the theory of reincarnation. Everyone took it for granted and while they spoke and acted from that point of view, it never occurred to them to formulate it as a belief.

The Hindu philosophers are many generations ahead of their Western colleagues in the subtlety and hair-splitting exactness of their definitions, yet even they have to depend upon the use of negatives to convey their meaning when dealing with certain terms. So, before attempting a positive definition of the term mysticism, I should like to say some of the things it is not.

Most people, particularly those with any pretence to a scientific

education, think of a mystic as an impractical visionary, given to hallucinations, wrapped in an ecstatic cloud of emotional and hysterical speculations, without rhyme or reason; of a man, or woman, who sets himself apart from the ordinary work-a-day world and lives a dream life of no substantial reality which incapacitates him from taking a hand in the affairs of life. The fact that there would appear to be exceptions to this general rule does not militate against its substantial accuracy; therefore the whole tribe is put out of court.

In spite of the undoubted fact that the history of religion has been full of just such people, and that they have gone by the generic name of mystics, when they were not called worse, I believe that it will be comparatively easy to show that it is a manifestly unjust characterization and that there is nothing inherently incompatible between mysticism and a high degree of practical efficiency and usefulness. Furthermore, I hope to show that mysticism has a field of its own and has contributed elements to the world's stock of knowledge and experience which we could not do without.

There have been countless definitions of mysticism, all more or less unsatisfactory. Vaughan gives some scores in his well known book, *Hours with the Mystics;* but without attempting to give the best of these, or indeed, without having the presumption to offer anything new in the way of a definition, I think it may be granted that, at the last analysis, a mystic is one who believes that it is possible to have conscious personal communication with Divinity (whatever we may mean by that) while still on earth. Beginning with Christ, the greatest of the mystics, they one and all made this claim, and it is the only claim they all did make. Therefore, whether it is considered a satisfactory definition or not, what I mean in this article by a mystic is one who strives to reach conscious, personal communication with a Higher Intelligence in the Universe, to receive advice and comfort and assistance from It, not only in spiritual matters, but in the practical affairs of life. Indeed, one of the things with which we are at once struck, is that there does not appear to be anything which is trivial in the eyes of the Lord.

A St. Catharine of Siena, may receive advice regarding the gravest and most important matters of European statecraft, and very sound and practical advice it was; while a St. Francis of Assisi, is told that he must cast away his cloak if he would be a true likeness of his ideal Christ. A St. Bernard may find within, the inspiration which made him the greatest preacher and reformer of his time, while a St. Theresa goes barefooted, because so ordered by her inner Guide. It is, indeed, this lack of apparent perspective which inclines so many of us to sneer at the so-called revelations of the mystics. We find it difficult to believe that the Guiding Power of the Universe can concern Itself with such

insignificant matters. But here we err. If there is one thing more than another that we have been taught by modern science, it is our presumption in attempting to determine what is little and what is really great. Our human standards have failed us too often to be a faithful guide.

James, in his *Varieties of Religious Experience,* says: "Our normal, waking, rational consciousness is but one special type of consciousness, whilst all about it, parted from it by the flimsiest screens, there lie potential forms of consciousness entirely different."

In addition to the realm of ordinary waking consciousness, we have on record the consciousness of dreams, of the drunkard suffering from delirium tremens; of the several phases of hypnotism; that resulting from the use of opium and other drugs; different degrees of insanity; hysteria; various kinds of religious exaltation and finally the condition of ecstacy. Paradoxical as it may sound, I believe that dreamless sleep should be included in the list, for consciousness never ceases. It simply ceases temporarily to be *self*-consciousness.

This list is by no means complete, but it serves to indicate several different kinds of states of consciousness arising from abnormal and unstable, physical and mental conditions.

There is no doubt that the tendency of the training and discipline which mystics tell us is required to "raise" the consciousness to a condition where it is capable of receiving impressions from the Spiritual Intelligence (for it seems to be an axiom that It cannot come down to us, but we must rise to It), has a tendency to create unstable physical and mental conditions. Fasting, physical austerities, prolonged contemplation and prayer, indeed any kind of ascetic practice unduly prolonged, all tend to disturb the nervous equilibrium and it is not to be wondered at, therefore, that a very frequent effect of such practices is the throwing of the consciousness into one of those "potential forms of consciousness entirely different" from our ordinary waking consciousness.

This is the obvious explanation of the visions of the Saints of which hagiology is full. These good people, whose brains and nervous systems were unequal to the strain of the necessary discipline, halted on the way towards union with God and leave us a record of every possible mental extravagance and hysterical hallucination. Their experiences have thrown so much discredit upon the whole pursuit, that we overlook the few who are of exactly the right temperament, who had the mental and nervous stability necessary, and the courage and indomitable will to persevere. What of these and the message they deliver? Are we to ignore them because "Many are called, but few are chosen." It would appear then that by certain well understood devotional exercises and a strict physical and moral regime, it is possible to alter the condition of consciousness, that these practices *may* lead us into any one

of numerous neuro-psychopathic conditions, but that they also *may* lead to something much higher than we are accustomed to; they may result in the attuning of our consciousness to the consciousness of Spiritual Intelligence and so produce the condition known as Illumination or Enlightenment. Furthermore, in certain notable cases, perhaps half a dozen in every 1,000 years, where body and brain, emotional nature and nervous system are in proper harmony and relation, this Illumination or Enlightenment brings one into direct, conscious, personal relationship with Christ, or whatever may be one's personification of God. Again I ask, if this be possible, why is it not the focus of all religious teaching and endeavor? What do creeds and systems matter in comparison? What else is there or can there be which is more worth while?

Jesus of Nazareth was the greatest of all mystics. It does not appear necessary to dilate upon the value of his mission. All the work of all the scientists that ever lived have not had so beneficial an effect upon the human race.

St. Francis was a mystic. Last summer, at his church at Assisi, I was shown, as a special privilege, and because I was an obviously reverent observer, a little slip of paper on which he had written his dying blessing of his favorite disciple, Leo. And what was it? That Leo too might have the supreme satisfaction of entering into personal conscious communication with Christ. And St. Francis founded one of the greatest religious orders that the church has known and which, in spite of the faults from which weak human nature could not keep free, has been of inestimable service to mankind.

St. Theresa was a mystic. She founded the reformed Carmelite order which still has thousands of devoted adherents who give their lives to the amelioration of the sorrows of humanity.

Thomas à Kempis was a mystic and his little book will be read ages after the most learned work of the most learned scientist of the nineteenth century has passed into the realm of useless and forgotten things. I would rather have written *The Imitation of Christ* than *The Critique of Pure Reason.* The first deals with eternal verities and will be as fresh and useful five thousand years from now as the sayings of Christ are two thousand years after they were uttered. Who will venture to predict that Kant's great work will be more than a philosophical and historical curiosity a thousand years hence?

Buddha was a mystic and has given a satisfactory religious belief to a third of the human race.

Why multiply instances. Can we contemplate the results of the lives of the five mystics named above and not grant at once that even from a materialistic, rational standpoint they have been responsible for greater good effects, for a wider and nobler influence upon the human race than all the common-sense practical people combined?

Nor must we be led astray by confusing their work with the work of their misguided and unmystical followers. We fail of clearness of vision if we misjudge the work of Jesus Christ by making him responsible for all the crimes of the Church during the last two thousand years. Think of what He accomplished *in spite* of the sinfulness and weakness and stupidity of His followers? Think of what He will accomplish in the ages to come when increased intelligence and a growing comprehension of His true mission will free the Church from the incumbrances of faulty human nature? To my mind true christianity is but beginning, and the future will see it reach heights of influence and usefulness which are not yet even suspected or imagined.

So too with St. Francis and with Buddha and with the other mystics. They struck key-notes with such force and power that the music of their lives comes echoing down the ages in spite of the crimes and extravagances of their followers. He who will may hear the clear, pure note of tender love, of infinite compassion, of selfless yearning for their weak and erring brothers, which rise out of the clamor of man-made forms and ceremonies, of dogma, of creed, of ritual. Were such lives visionary, without practical usefulness? On the contrary, who shall dare set any measure to the boundless power for good of such men as these? Can the world spare any such? Yet they were mystics.

Nor should we be misled because for every great mystic there were scores or hundreds who failed to produce useful results, who spent their lives in ecstatic dreams, or were the victims of absurd hallucinations. We might as well quarrel with a scientific education because every boy does not grow into a Darwin or a Tyndall. There must be degrees of efficiency in mysticism as in everything else; only in the case of mysticism we are too prone to judge the tree by the many rotten branches, instead of by the few sound limbs.

There is no essential difference between the Church mystic and the mystic who was forced to leave the Church, was burned by the Church, or never was within the Church. Fenelon, when he defended Madame Guyon from the attacks of the clerical party led by Bossuet, paralleled all her important statements with sayings of Church Saints, in his *Maxims of the Saints,* but this did not avail to save her, for she had pushed her mystical ideal to its logical extreme and had taught that if it be true that man may enter into personal, conscious communion with God, then he does not need the intercession of the priest nor any other ecclesiastical aid to salvation. This was rank heresy, but it was the only heresy which the Church ever opposed in mystics. So long as the mystic used the paraphernalia of the Church in combination with his teachings, as did St. Theresa and St. Catharine, John of the Cross, St. Francis and the host of others, they received praise and sometimes great rewards. But the minute the mystic taught that this interior communion with God was

all-sufficient, then the whole organization rose up in arms and cried anathema. They saw only too clearly the downfall of the ecclesiastical structure.

It was upon this rock that Molinos was wrecked, and that, after his book, *Il Guida Spirituale,* had received the formal sanction of the Inquisition. The Inquisition read the book, endorsed the teachings and authorized its publication. The Church did not foresee that anyone really believing the teachings would have no further use for the confessional, the mass, indulgences, intercession of priests, and other clerical benefices; and it was not until whole convents and monasteries full of the devoted adherents of Molinos stopped their usual religious practices that the Church awoke to its danger. It is said that Molinos had a million followers when arrested by the Inquisition in 1685. In three years he had none; which shows what a very effective thing organization is.

Assuming for the moment that an idea backed by such testimony, from such high sources, may be true, and who is there so bold as to deny its possibility, let us examine the character of inspiration, if we may use the word to define the effect which God, or the Spiritual Intelligence, has upon the human consciousness. Let us also examine the conditions and observances necessary before such a relationship can be effected.

There would appear to be three main degrees of inspiration:

1. Where any reasonably good human being is "helped" in work of any kind undertaken with a good motive. Such help is entirely unconscious to the recipient, but is none the less real for that reason and is none the less effective. One can readily imagine this to be a most potent instrument in God's hands for creating conditions in the world which His wisdom sees are needed. The majority of sincere clergymen might receive much of this kind of unconscious inspiration. Nor would I exclude the scientist who often works in quite as sincere a spirit of devotion.

The quality of the product of this kind of inspiration is naturally strictly limited by the quality and abilities of the brain receiving it, an important point too often lost sight of.

2. The second kind of Inspiration works a step higher in consciousness. The feeling of being helped is often present. One is conscious of the wish for and hope of Divine assistance and one is often filled with an interior warmth and glow, a force one feels to be not one's own, an unusual facility to speak with eloquence or write with ease and power; and when the inspired moment passes, and you finish the bit of writing upon which you were engaged, you can feel the pulsation of the "power" gradually subside, and perhaps you slip back into your ordinary field of consciousness with something like a sigh. Those moments come

to many men and are the treasured times of one's life; but be it noted that inspiration of this class is probably limited to those who have made some considerable progress in the control of mean and low tendencies, and who are instigated by noble and unselfish desires to be of use in the world.

3. The highest type of inspiration may be very high indeed, and its product may range all the way from the obviously inspired teachings of an exalted being like Jesus Christ to the practical directions of a Mother Juliana for controlling an irritable temper. It may cause astonishment that such extremes should be classed together. It may even seem impious that the teachings of Christ should be bracketed with the writings of an obscure English nun, but I believe the difference lies in the medium through which the inspiration is transmitted to the world and not in the character of the inspiration itself.

The characteristic of this sort of inspiration is that it is *conscious*. The person experiencing it *knows* that it comes from God. It may come in a vision, seen by the "Spiritual eye," like the Revelations of St. John. It may come in words like the "voice" of Tauler and teach him noble maxims, to be afterwards preached to a wondering and grateful world; or it may come in thoughts, to be laborously transcribed in many volumes of tortuous and mystifying words, like Boehme and von Ruysbrock and Madame Guyon. Education has nothing to do with it. Boehme was a self-taught shoemaker. Joan of Arc, a shepherd girl. George Fox, the son of a country storekeeper. Christ, the son of a poor carpenter. What, then, are the conditions which induce the mystical state?

In a word—holy living. What the church, what all churches have taught for time immemorial, as the proper life for a man to lead. Renunciation of self; love of God and one's fellow creatures; purity, physical, mental and moral; temperateness in diet; serenity and calmness of emotions; meditation and prayer, and the deliberate desire to reach Divine Communion. This is the Christian teaching. It is the teaching of Buddhism, of Brahmanism, of the mystical sects of Mohammedanism, of Lao-tze; it may be found in a hundred mystical treatises of all ages and of all people and is the Rule of Life of every great religion. It must be so, for the aim of all religions is union with God and the road to travel is the same road in every age and in every clime.

Needless to say that mystics are in hearty sympathy and complete accord with the New Theology movement. They not only believe in the immanence of God, but they go a step further and say that as we live and move and have our being in God, there is nothing but our own wills which limits the extent to which we can partake of His nature. The closer our personalities are made to conform to His Divinity, in a word, the holier we grow, the closer and more complete will be our communion

with Him. Again, however, I would point out that by the use of the word God I do not mean the Great Ultimate Essence of all things, but divine or semi-divine representatives of that Divine Essence, such as Jesus.

If we focus our prayers and meditations upon Jesus, it will be to Jesus that we shall ultimately reach. I mean this literally. The mystic believes that a proper course of living and training will actually enable a living man to communicate consciously, face to face, with Jesus Christ, who lived and died nineteen hundred years ago, but who, in a spiritual sense, is as much alive and in the world to-day as he ever was, and with whom it is just as possible to communicate to-day as it was when he walked by the shores of Galilee. I cannot put this too plainly. I do not mean it in any mystic sense whatever, but as a plain statement of fact. And its significance is so tremendous that to me it seems the essence of religion. What do dogmas, and creeds and formularies matter in the face of such a possibility?

We cannot all hope for such enlightenment. The way is long, the road uphill all the way, and human nature is weak; but it is much to know that some do reach the goal, that all may reach the goal, and that those who fail to get all the way, do not waste their efforts, for the Divine Intelligence accepts every least effort and rewards it by giving spiritual life as abundantly as it may. We place the limit on the giving, not God. God is much more anxious that we should reach the Light than we are to reach it.

These are the commonplaces of mysticism, but their significance is little understood even by religiously minded people. And yet how could it be otherwise? Cannot we all feel at times the yearning, tender love and solicitude of Christ? Do we not feel Him drawing us to Him? Does not the power and majesty of the Universe, which we are just beginning to understand, express His care and love? If we were in His place would not we, weak and erring as we are, and limited as our present point of view must be, would not we seek every opportunity to kindle the flame of spiritual life in the breasts of our children; would not we inspire and vitalize the hearts and the minds of those who trusted and prayed to us? Would there be any limit to what we would give but the limits which natural law placed upon the understandings of our supplicants?

To the mystic it is as clear as day that the possibilities of the spiritual life are in our own hands and that there is no limit but our own weakness and inertia to the development of our inner natures. Man can communicate with God if he but wills to do so.

JOHN BLAKE.

TALKS ON RELIGION.

[*Editorial Note:* The publication of "Talks on Religion" in book form necessitates the discontinuance of this series in the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY. We print, in this issue, the concluding dialogue and a brief summary of the intervening chapters. The book itself may be obtained from the Secretary T. S. A., 159 Warren Street, Brooklyn, N. Y., or from the publishers, Longmans, Green & Co., 91 Fifth Avenue, New York, and 39 Paternoster Row, London.]

THE meetings in the Mathematician's rooms had continued throughout the winter. The Historian had devoted an evening to tracing the history of the Church as an external organization. Beginning with the statement that Christianity derived its name, but neither its teaching nor organization, from Christ, the first part of his thesis was directed to showing what he believed to be the origin and growth of these latter. He pointed out that once organization and doctrine had been established, membership in the one and adherence to the other became necessary to salvation; so that their effect was to substitute conformance to the letter, for obedience to the spirit of the law and the teaching. The crimes of the Church, its superstition, bigotry, and cruelty, its self-seeking and opposition to all progress, its political, rather than its religious character through the Middle Ages,—all these were dwelt upon and illustrated by writings and records of mediæval churchmen. Then, turning to the present and the future, the Historian raised the problem of how to better this, and sought its solution along two lines, first in the denationalization of the Church, putting it on a legal parity with a literary or scientific society; and, second, in the removal of superstition by the fostering of science.

In the discussion which followed, the Mathematician pointed out how admirably the Historian's paper instanced the central problem to which the meetings owed their origin: the problem and need of analyzing religious history and phenomena that we may distinguish between the action therein of religion itself and of those tendencies in us with which the religious spirit must contend. In particular the Mathematician dwelt upon the tendency to replace the spirit by the letter, to remove attention from the end and fasten it upon the means, seeing in this tendency that which led to the gradual materialization and externalizing of all religion and the danger in all organization. He held, however, that organization of some sort was essential to effectiveness, that it was, in fact, essential to the continued existence of anything at all. So that the practical problem was how to preserve its effectiveness while eliminating its evil.

The Pragmatist disputed this view, seeing no reason to believe that organization was more necessary to religion than to poetry; to which it

was replied that organization was essential to poetry. There was some discussion upon this point, and then the Editor paralleled the history of the external Church by the history of the "Church Invisible," the succession of Illuminati, and traced the flow of mystic thought throughout the centuries, noting its recrudescence in the last quarter of each, and the invariableness of its teaching and similies despite differences of time and of language. Thereafter the talk passed to the causes for that intolerance the Church seemed so greatly to foster, and this led to a discussion, lasting far into the night, of monotheism and its misunderstandings, and the great monotheistic systems of the past. Late as the talk was prolonged it was felt that one evening had not sufficed for an adequate discussion of such a problem as that of the place and function of organization in religion, to which, therefore, the next meeting was also devoted.

The Pragmatist began by re-emphasizing the universality of religion: that the essence of all things is sacred, that God is to be found, and worshipped and served, in each moment and act of our lives. He held that nothing should stand between man and God. Religion being the relation of man to the Absolute, he argued that it must be direct and immediate as well as universal. To him it seemed that the Church stepped in and said intercourse was to be carried on through it and only through it. It wished to be an assistance and intermediary but succeeded only in being an added veil between us and the light, separating what should blend, restricting what is universal, and making of religion a matter of an hour or two on Sunday instead of the constant spirit of our lives. He felt that the theory that religion is concerned with organization had greatly impoverished life, leading us to look abroad for the sacredness that lies most close at home, in love, and work, and duty. To the extent to which organized religion is exclusive he found it an obscurant and a barrier—robbing life, dwarfing religion, obscuring God.

The Pragmatist was followed by the Oxonian, who as earnestly advocated the value of the church organization as the Pragmatist had denied it. He dwelt upon the need of times of attuning ourselves to the inner rhythm, in order that our relation to the universal might be one of harmony rather than discord; and that it was through this harmony that we become conscious of the spirit of life, whose universality and immanence be admitted, but the consciousness of which he found both too limited and too evanescent. It was upon this need that the defense of the Church rested—and to this that its service ministered. He next passed to the efficiency of organization, using as an illustration the masterly use made thereof by the Christian Scientists. Finally he pleaded that the Church should be viewed not only for what it can give to us,—but for what we can give to it, and through it, to the world, recognizing that Christianity is social, and that its forms are only symbols, —symbols such as are necessary to science as to religion, or to thought itself.

The Author was the third of the principal speakers. He took issue with the Historian in that he thought it unquestionable that Jesus himself did establish an organization and did so deliberately. This he supported from the biblical narrative, showing Jesus as teaching a "new birth from above" which ushered the soul into the realm of the heavens, and into immediate spiritual touch with the spirit of the Master—into an inner relationship which was not to terminate with the death of Jesus but to continue indefinitely. It was inevitable, in the Author's thought, that this inner relation of the souls of disciples to the spirit of the Master, should imply a new relation among these souls themselves; and that this would be a sort of divine and necessary organization, flowing out of their common spiritual relation to the Master, and due to the driving power of the Master's spiritual force, affecting them all alike. Thus, the Author held, there was first the spiritual organization of the disciples, as taught and exemplified by Jesus,—an order in which these disciples were but the first members in an unbroken series of those who have realized in their inner lives the ideal of Jesus, and which is really continuous throughout the centuries. And on the other hand, there was the organization of the disciples of these disciples, the students in various towns, with their "elder students" and "overseers" gradually developing into priests and bishops. This secondary organization, the Church of history, he held was, at first, entirely natural and healthy, but in virtue of certain intrusive elements, notably the desire to dominate, it was choked by such overgrowths as the Historian had indicated. If rid of these overgrowths, as to day it is being rid, it would again become as healthy, as wholesome, as humane as it was in the days when Paul took leave of "the elder students" of Ephesus on his way to Tyre and thence to Rome.

These three views of the place and function of religious organization were discussed at length. The Mathematician pointed out that the Author's presentation of the church organization made it but the historic expression or symbol of an actual brotherhood, of ties which are matters not of external forms but of inner fact, and totally dependent upon one's own interior attitude or the relation in which one puts oneself to the Christ spirit and "the will of the Father in Heaven." This, he thought was something the Church must realize if it were to be indeed Catholic or avoid the charge of exclusion the Pragmatist had brought against it. The Zoologist had much to say upon the effect upon organisms of rigid encasements which were cast off only to be again replaced, and also upon the needlessness of associations for what was primarily an individual function. Here he was opposed by the Clergyman, as well as the Oxonian, both of whom argued that religion was social, and there was much talk of the meaning of individuality and how it was affected

by union with other individuals. Of all present, perhaps the Social Philosopher was the most earnest in his plea for individuality—that the separate forms and ceremonies of different denominations should be preserved unaltered, as evidences of the infinite richness of religious aspiration. Why, he asked, should we seek to merge in one grey common tone, all this rich variety of color, all this wealth of association and tradition, all this living heart history of this race? Was it not all infinitely beautiful, infinitely pathetic and infinitely dear? The Author replied to him, calling attention to the twofold aspect in the teaching of all religious leaders. First, there is the distinctly local or personal element which is, for example, Chinese in Lao-Tze, Indian in Buddha, Persian in Zoroaster and so on; and second there is the universal element which is the same in all teachings. It is this latter, he maintained, that is Religion, and if each religion, and each denomination, would dwell upon that which is universal in its belief and service, recognizing the rest as personal, neither to be forced nor required, then unity could be attained without impoverishment. It was, in his view, a question of emphasis.

The talk at the next meeting remained long informal and without premeditated direction. In fact, however, it all turned upon a single theme—the new life that is stirring in our Western thought—the spirit that is breathing on the hearts of men awakening them to the reality of the inner life of religion. They spoke of Pragmatism and its emphasis upon living rather than believing; of Dr. Inge's Mysticism and its defense of the Logos doctrine—that in literal truth the soul is one with the Christ and draws its life therefrom. The Author drew a detailed parallel between the thought of Mr. Campbell's *New Theology* and Sir Oliver Lodge's *Substance of Faith*. The Philosopher spoke of the revival of Greek thought—the metaphysic of Aristotle and the concept of the pagan gods living in a universe for which they were not responsible, but whose laws they maintained. One after another the signs of the times were inspected and in each was some token of the renaissance of religion. Much there was to remedy, much that was mistaken, but the consciousness of the mistake was growing and with it the will toward betterment. Particularly did this seem true in the Church—where exclusion was still in evidence, but where one by one the barriers were being removed. Of this the talk was long and intimate, and in it the closing hours were spent of what all felt must be the last full meeting of the season. The Mathematician had half intended to try to sum the whole series of talks and exhibit the synthesis which had formed itself in his mind. But for some reason he refrained, and, as the Author said, the synthesis was better left for each to make for himself. It truly existed, but such meetings as these had been should end not in summaries, but in friendship and inspiration.

IX.

Some weeks later the city was scorching in a sudden breathless heat. The Mathematician's personal affairs had kept him in town longer than was his wont, till he had grown used to solitary dining in deserted clubs and restaurants. This evening, however, as he passed from the quivering glare of the streets to the dim quiet of the club, he had met the Historian. The two had dined together, and later had walked to the Mathematician's rooms where they were now seated before the low wide window. The night breeze had finally come, and with it a hint of freshness from the distant sea. They had been talking of the Historian's work, of the endless patience and labor involved in the search for the original sources—the vast mass of possible doubtful material which must be examined only to be rejected, the care with which evidence must be weighed and sifted—and yet the richness of the reward.

"I wish," the Historian had said, "that we could wipe out all the second-hand opinions of history, all the overgrowth of tradition and prejudice, and force the world back in each case to the original records, or, let us say, a clear translation of them, for its information. Perhaps, then, we could see things as they were. But now it is all overlaid with centuries of imaginings. Do you know what has done us the most harm? It is the dramatic and literary instinct. It requires constant watchfulness not to write drama rather than history; to keep oneself down to the bare facts which are known to us, and not weave around them a fabric of our own. And it is simply astounding how error perpetuates itself; how something once printed is quoted and assumed, and appears and reappears again and again, in the most diverse places, till you can scarcely believe so much could have sprung from so little. Until we popularize the sources we shall never be able to separate the facts from the fictions which cling to them.

"After all there is no study so fascinating; for it is our own nature that history reveals to us. History is the great enlightener. If we would only live by its light! Do you know, A——, I believe that nine-tenths of the trouble with the Church to-day is due to simple ignorance of history. The ordinary clerical attitude toward the Church, particularly toward its creeds and dogmas, would be simply inconceivable if their actual historic origin and development were understood. I do not know what the reason of it is. Partly, I suppose, the tendency to repeat error, like parrots, from which we all suffer. And more, I suspect, is accounted for by our habit of leaving what we learn unassimilated; isolated in its own pigeon hole,—as though it had the measles and must be kept from the other occupants of our mind; whereas the spread of the contagion which it carries is the best service a fact or idea can do for us.

"I doubt if we make enough of anything that we know—that the

earth moves round the sun; or that ants keep cows. I am sure we do not make enough of the doctrine of evolution. We talk about it at wearisome length, but we do not even yet assume it in our habitual thought of ourselves. It would make a wonderful difference if we really would look at our own lives from that standpoint. We adopt it readily enough toward the lower orders, but not with ourselves—not as applying to that part of us which itself assumes standpoints. We shrink from realizing that our intelligence is not a ready-made hand-me-down, not some perfect immutable principle fresh from God. But in truth it is different to-day from what it was in the past, or what it will be in the future. Our minds carry over with them into the present much that belongs to past conditions. Much of us really pertains to the cat and dog stage of development. There are atrophying "meows" and rudimentary tales in our minds as in our bodies. We are continually trying to make our conditions square with our wants. We should make our wants square with our conditions. And we could do this if we would but realize how our wants have arisen; how many of them are anachronisms, survivals of a finished past.

"It is pathetic to me to see how the clergy live in fear of present facts. They are in constant dread of some discovery which will upset all their edifice of dogma, and they cannot tell from what quarter the blow may fall. It may be a papyrus newly uncovered in Egypt, or some ancient manuscript left moldering through the centuries in a forgotten monastery, or it may be from the laboratories of our chemists and biologists. They cannot tell. All they know is this feeling of vague alarm, the pressure of the young present upon the lingering past; the pressure of facts upon theories that are out of tune with facts. Why, they have a regular system of defense; scouts and pickets which waylay any new "scab" idea, and if they cannot stop it, try to assassinate it. Reading some of the clerical papers, you would think religion was on strike against progress, and, refusing to work there itself, was still desperately afraid its place would be taken by a better artisan."

The Mathematician: I recognize the picture. But it is not the portrait of religion, however true to some members of the Church.

The Historian: I know your view of religion, as the image of our next step in evolution. That would be just as it should be; just what we would like it to be. But the trouble is that religion always seems to image the past and not the future; to remain itself upon the preceding step, crying out upon all who venture to advance. The Church is constantly going back.

The Mathematician: That is organization, not religion.

The Historian: Yes, but the Church is an organization, and religion is always organizing. Remember what our own good Clergyman said of his love and need for organization; and he is far more progressive than the clergy as a whole.

The Mathematician: I have a great admiration for our friend the Clergyman. I admire his courage, his force and his effectiveness. He is always in dead earnest about his work. He represents an element in the Church which stands for genuine helpfulness and for genuine religion. He is content to leave outgrown formulas aside, neither attacking nor defending them, but re-emphasizing spiritual reality and the worth of spiritual experience. He keeps his eyes on what has to be accomplished, and I think it is the tremendous effectiveness of organization that most appeals to him. Here is an instrument ready to his hands. By means of it he can reach thousands of people where alone he would reach tens. He wishes to use it, not to be its slave.

The Historian: But it is so largely discredited. One rarely treats a pulpit utterance seriously in these days. You take it as part of the ceremony, part of what is expected—and so without significance—like the formal inanities of social intercourse. You may really "have had a delightful time," but no one would think of taking you seriously when you say so. It would seem to me that the pulpit would be the last place in the world from which to start a genuine reform, and that the Church must be more of a hindrance than a help.

The Mathematician: Nevertheless there is there to-day the genuine religious spirit which is moving such men as F——, and which gives the hope that the Church as a whole may yet follow it. That is why I championed the Church against your exposition of its failure as an historic institution. There is to-day a better chance for it than ever before. Can the new spirit win? If so, the Church is far too valuable, potentially at least far too effective, to be dismissed as a failure. Look at the work F—— is himself doing—not only in broadening and deepening the religious beliefs of his congregation, but also in civic betterment. His Church is a real factor in the neighborhood. Where I see work like that I want to pitch in and help.

The Historian: The trouble is that organization, particularly church organization, inevitably tends to get into the hands of older men. It must always crystalize about what has been; about the opinions of the majority, not of the few. Therefore both its form and its ruling spirit is always of the past—an incumbrance upon progress. You think that despite this it may be made valuable? But surely all this ceremonial and totemism is anachronous—sheer survivals from barbarism; fossil remains, preserved in organization, of a life long departed.

The Mathematician: I think there was point in what the Oxonian said of ceremony and symbols. The variations of ordinary dress are more noticeable and disturbing to me than the uniformity of a surplice. We need symbolism, I suspect, but we need still more to recognize it as such, and bend all our energies to the reality beyond. There is value in ancient tradition, if we use it as a means, not an end.

The Historian: But why should we try to force the new into the old forms? Did not Jesus himself say that no man puts new wine into old bottles? The world is not the same as it was two hundred years ago. Why should we try to deform the growing present by forcing it into outworn moulds? The attempt to square the geology of Genesis with the geology of Science is simply pitiable.

The Mathematician: No one cares about the geology of Genesis.

The Historian: You mean that you and I do not. But there are many who do; and fifty years ago it was a burning question for all. I referred to it, though, only as an example typical of much else—of the desperate running fight the Church has made, always obstinate, but always forced to yield, always defeated.

The Mathematician: And only seeing afterwards that defeat was not loss, but gain.

The Historian: That is it exactly. But the Church has never learned the lesson—nor do I think have most of us. We need to recognize that the intelligence of man is itself capable of evolution and that it must leave behind it the things it has outgrown. We are such cowards here. We cling to the familiar simply because it is familiar. We dread the new. At least many do—not all. The Pragmatist is right. It is an individual matter. We must make our minds conform to conditions; not be continually seeking to build systems to suit our desires. We should eliminate desires that do not fit the facts, not strive to gratify them. There are those two ways of gaining satisfaction. But the one establishes us firmly upon nature itself; the other puts us at odds with facts. And in the end, facts have a way of triumphing, when all our work must be done anew. But worse than this, our systems always cramp us. We have to carry our fools' paradise around with us, fearful lest if we once overstep its borders we may never return.

The Church is constantly fettering the spirit. The whole tendency of Christianity is to put as many veils between our intelligence and the universe as possible. No one seems to realize how it superimposed again upon humanity what the best pagan minds had succeeded in eliminating. The freedom which Plato and Cicero and the educated men of Greece and Rome had acquired, their direct view and acceptance of life, were all wiped out with Christianity, and this great mass of infantile cosmology again imposed. If we do attribute, as the Clergyman did, the moral betterment of man to Christianity, we must also count the cost at which it was obtained. But those vices were never prevalent in Germany, for instance. Probably they existed only in certain Mediterranean centers. Nor do I believe vice was so much more universal in Greece and Rome than it is to-day in our large cities. Certainly American Paris cannot claim to be moral. Of course the scholars and literary men are less frank now than they were. Probably they are better too. Though where

you will find Plato's peer is hard to see. Surely in his "Laws" he is as outspoken as the Clergyman against unnatural vice. But on the whole it seems to me that all these two thousand years have only seen a detour so far as religious thought has been concerned. I do not see that Christianity has brought us as much as it has taken away. I do not particularly turn to the Bible for stimulus and help. I read it for its style, and with deep wonder at many of the sayings of Jesus, at his character and teaching. But I do not get as much stimulus from them as I do from the *Life of Leslie Stephen,* for example. Jesus's problems were not mine, while Stephen's were. I do not particularly want to do what Jesus did; while Stephen's is just the type of big, strong, sane, all round mind that I admire. How is it with you? Where do you look for strength? Do you turn to the Bible in your own troubles?

The Mathematician: It depends, I think, upon the kind of trouble. I go often to the teaching of Jesus; rarely, if ever, to any other part of the Bible. There are a number of books I use in this way. I suppose everyone has his own favorites. I am very fond of Thomas á Kempis, and of parts of St. Augustine. But *Light on the Path,* and the *Bhagavad Gita* and many others, Marcus Aurelius, and Epictetus, and Emerson—they are a queer collection—are quite as dear to me. I am particularly fond of the mystics, and find helpful the records of all those who were trying to broaden and uplift their consciousness. It is rather an awkward description but may serve to show the kind of book I mean.

You like Maitland's *Life of Leslie Stephen* because it helps you do what you are trying to do. It helps you live your own human life clearly and forcibly and effectively. As you said, Stephen's problems were much your own and the way he bore his burdens helps you to do the like. But beyond this there is something more. There is the reality of the spiritual life. And here I think such difference as there is between us has its origin. To me this reality is the one supreme fact of life, while to you it still seems a matter of impersonal speculation. The kingdom of heaven is to be entered here and now. As Jesus said, it is "at hand." There is a new type of spiritual consciousness which can be attained—the consciousness of the heavens. It is our next step away from the cat and the dog and our rudimentary mental tales. And it is also the great adventure, the call to which is eternally vibrant in our hearts, and upon which the mystics of all the ages have entered. Some description of this consciousness they have left behind them, with some record of the road thereto, to help those who follow after. This is what I am trying to do—believing in its reality, its human possibility, and its infinite value. Therefore it is that Jesus's sayings have for my efforts the same intimate personal application that you find in the thoughts of Leslie Stephen. For I do not look upon them as remote morality, but as descriptions of a road I would travel; or as the science of the soul's growth and life, as exact and

definite as the science of chemistry, and, like it, to be verified only by experiment.

The second difference between your view and mine flows, I think, naturally from this, and seems to me really to be in the question as to whether or no we are in the front rank of evolution. If we are, then each step we take is indeed new and so of necessity an abandonment of the past. But if on the other hand others have gone before us, then may the life of personal religious experience have been the same from time immemorial. As we advance we may grow nearer to all the great of all the past and enter into a subtle sense of comradeship and communion with them. This latter seems to me the truth; and, therefore, I am the more hopeful for the ancient systems; hopeful that they will throw aside the overgrowths of ages and turn once more to their true mission, leading men to the heritage of the spirit and emphasizing again its reality and its worth. This is my hope. Whether it will be justified or not I do not know. But it is at least a hope worth fighting for—and more than that we do not need.

The Historian: I think you have come very close to the heart of the matter in what you have been saying now. Though I agree with your first point more than with your second. I do not know how to describe personal religion. As I said, it seems not the same but still akin to the sense of beauty; the appreciation and delight in art and music and nature seem all akin to the religious sense and we think of them first in seeking similies for it. But perhaps there are no better words than the old ones of love and peace which are both felt and radiated. The acquirement of such peace, if one could gain it, must bring the greatest help and benefit not only to oneself but to others. This is indeed very much worth while—if it can be acquired. I had thought of it more as a matter of temperament, as something we were born with or without. I had not thought of slowly inculcating it in oneself—or of its being the aim of religion. I would think, from the echoes of the Eastern religions that have reached me, that these were more fitted to teach this, and probably had been more successful in inparting it than had Christianity. Christianity does not seem to have bent its efforts to this, nor paid much heed to it. Nevertheless you believe that it always has been in Christianity, and that, despite the sins of the Church, despite its long record of obstruction and the dwarfing of the spirit, despite all this, you believe that the Church may still be used to teach genuine religion?

The Mathematician: I believe there is a fighting chance for it, and while there is that I mean to fight for it.

The Historian: I do not. I am not so optimistic. This side of it I must leave to you, or others. But in the personal side I agree with you. That—strange as it may seem to you—satisfies me. More goes

on inside each of us than anyone else ever guesses. And this seems very true to me. Very well worth while. I am glad you said it.

Now I think I shall walk home. Good night.

The Mathematician moved back to the window, looking up, out from the cavernous street in which he dwelt, far into the still spaces of the night. The stars in their wide courses held his gaze, and before he turned away they were paling in the summer dawn. Before him came the vision the Clergyman had drawn of the spirit of Christ waiting and working through the centuries till He could come again in the hearts of men, His meaning and His mission understood. And in the Mathematician's ears there rang the lines from Revelations:

"I, Jesus, am the bright, the morning star.

"Surely I come quickly."

HENRY BEDINGER MITCHELL.

"If you would malign another's faith remember your own. If you cannot understand his belief stop and consider. Can you understand your own? Do you know whence came these emotions that have risen and made your faith?

"The faiths are all brothers, all born of the same mystery. There are older and younger, stronger and weaker, some babble in strange tongues maybe, different from your finer speech. But what of that? Are they the less children of the Great Father for that? Surely if there be the unforgivable offence, the sin against the Holy Ghost, it is this, to deny the truth that lies in all the faiths.

"Religion is the music of the infinite echoed from the hearts of men."

H. FIELDING HALL.

THE GROWTH OF PHILOSOPHY IN AMERICA.

IT has long been a conviction of mine, that when the American genius awakens, when America realizes the existence of the spiritual world, this young nation will turn to the problem of spiritual life with a faith, an immediate will, an unhesitating and hearty certainty, which have rarely been equaled in human history. The American people already have one of the supreme qualities of the mystic, the immediate action of the will, which turns conviction into act. There is no lingering, no vague and wasteful dreaming, no speculating too finely on the event, none of that weak diffuseness which sharply distinguishes the dreamer from the real mystic. As soon as a conviction is reached, it is acted upon, with faith, with enthusiasm, and the joy and gladness which go with confident, positive power. Owing to this very power of immediacy, of instant will, we see in America a materialism more complete, more sweeping, more triumphant in detail, than anything known to human experience. Having determined to conquer material forces, material powers, material obstacles, the Americans go at them with a vigor and nerve that carry all before them. They have implicit faith in themselves, implicit faith in the power of the will, and there is none of that fatal leakage between thought and action, which has rendered the plans of so many gifted peoples and persons null and void. One of our comic papers had a story the other day which illustrates this. A small boy was being put to bed, and, before saying his prayers, was being instructed in the rudiments of religion. His mother told him that the great Father of all was in every place, filling the whole of His world with His divine Presence. The little boy listened eagerly, and then asked: "God is everywhere?" "Yes!" answered his mother. "God is here, in this house?" "Yes, dear!" "Right here in this room?—here quite close to me?" "Yes, dear!" answered the mother. The small boy sat up in bed and remarked, with cheery conviction, "Hello, God!"

When the American genius awakes to the presence and immediacy of divine life, it will do exactly the same. It will turn that conviction into immediate action, following after sacrifice and aspiration as swiftly, with as whole-hearted, cheerful faith, as it now follows after the conquest of material forces. And the result will be a power that will raise humanity.

An immense service has been rendered to American thought by the

writing of a recent book entitled "American Philosophy, the Early Schools," by Isaac Woodbridge Riley. He has shown, and shown with admirable lucidity and cogency, that American thought has already a consistent being, reached through a development of nearly three centuries, and producing at least two mystics of undoubted genius; and this steady growth in the past is the best possible reason for belief that American thought will produce even greater fruit in the future. Dr. Riley, though preserving an admirable impartiality throughout, and doing ample justice to all schools, mystic or materialist, Puritan or Deist, has an evident bent toward mysticism himself, and his purpose in this volume seems to be, to lead gradually up to Emerson, and to show that Emerson is, on the one hand, a genuine child of American thought, a genuine successor to many American thinkers of less renown but of undoubted force, and, on the other, a really original genius, a commanding figure in the history of modern philosophic thought.

One of the most enlightening things in this very enlightening book is, it seems to me, the way in which Dr. Riley shows how the philosophical speculation of different periods of American history was related to the political life of these periods, and, further, how different tendencies found their expression in different parts of the country. Thus "in its broader aspects the North stood for idealism, the South for materialism, and the Middle States for the mediating philosophy of common sense. In addition to this broader distribution there was a more precise localization of the philosophical schools, since the places where they originated also depended upon the periods in which they originated. Here the larger colonial colleges, almost in the order of their founding, constituted so many radiating centers of speculation, Harvard being identified with deism, Yale with idealism, and Princeton with realism." Such a sentence as this at once gives a new interest to the study of the intellectual life of America, and a new meaning to our national universities. Dr. Riley works out this development in detail, with lucidity, vividness, humor and logical force, bringing us in certain directions up to about the middle of the nineteenth century.

But perhaps the most striking thing in the present volume is the way in which Jonathan Edwards is revealed, not as a narrow and iron-hearted Puritan, consigning "one to Heaven and ten to Hell," for the greater glory of God; but rather as a mystic, a man of genius, the first authentic expression, perhaps, of the American spirit in philosophy, and what is specially interesting to lovers of Emerson, in many things the forerunner of that great mystic and seer. Dr. Riley shows the true Jonathan Edwards in the best of all possible ways: by letting Edwards reveal himself; for instance, in such a passage as this:

"We have shown that the Son of God created the world for this very end—to communicate Himself and image of His own excellency.

. . . When we behold the light and brightness of the sun, the golden edges of an evening cloud, or the beauteous bow, we behold the adumbrations of His glory and goodness; and in the blue sky, of His mildness and gentleness. There are also many things wherein we may behold His awful majesty: in the sun in his strength, in comets, in thunder, with the lowering thunder-clouds, in ragged rocks and the brows of mountains." There is something profoundly mystical in this perception that the things seen are an expression of the things unseen, eternal.

Edwards himself tries to express this truth, that Nature is the revelation of the Divine, when he writes: "And, indeed, the secret lies here: That, which truly is the Substance of all bodies, is the infinitely exact, and precise, and perfectly stable Idea in God's mind, together with His stable Will, that the same shall gradually be communicated to us and to other minds, according to certain fixed and exact established methods and laws; or, in somewhat different language, the infinitely exact and precise Divine Idea, together with an answerable exact, precise, and stable Will, with respect to correspondent communications to created Minds, and effects on their minds." We need hardly point out that this is exactly the same thought as that in the ancient teaching of India, in which God is spoken of as Parabrahm, the Will of God being called Purusha, and the Thought or Idea of God Prakriti; the visible universe being due to the interaction of the active Will and the passive Idea, with result that the picture of Nature is imprinted on the consciousness of the hosts of individual minds, or Jivas. Here, as in Emerson, we find the essential kinship between American mysticism and Oriental wisdom.

The most eloquent passage quoted from Jonathan Edwards is, perhaps, this:

"After this my sense of divine things gradually increased, and became more and more lively, and had more of that inward sweetness. The appearance of everything was altered; there seemed to be, as it were, a calm, sweet cast or appearance of divine glory, in almost everything. God's excellency, his wisdom, his purity and love, seemed to appear in everything; in the sun, moon, and stars; in the clouds, and the blue sky; in the grass, flowers, trees; in the water, and all nature; which used greatly to fix my mind. I often used to sit and view the moon for continuance; and in the day, spent much time in viewing the clouds and sky, to behold the sweet glory of God in these things: in the mean time singing forth, with a low voice, my contemplations of the Creator and Redeemer. And scarce anything, among all the works of nature, was so sweet to me as thunder and lightning; formerly, nothing had been so terrible to me. Before, I used to be uncommonly terrified with thunder and to be struck with terror when I saw a thunder-storm rising; but now, on the contrary, it rejoiced me. I felt God, so to speak, at the first appearance of a thunder-storm; and used to take the opportunity, at

such times, to fix myself in order to view the clouds, and see the lightning play, and hear the majestic and awful voice of God's thunder, which oftentimes was exceedingly entertaining, leading me to sweet contemplations of my sweet and glorious God. While thus engaged, it always seemed natural to me to sing, or chant forth my meditations; or, to speak my thoughts in soliloquies with a singing voice. Holiness, as I then wrote down some of my contemplations of it, appeared to me to be of a sweet, pleasant, charming, serene calm nature; which brought an inexpressible purity, brightness, peacefulness, and ravishment to the soul. In other words, that it made the soul like a field or garden of God, with all manner of pleasant flowers; all pleasant, delightful, and undisturbed; enjoying a sweet calm, and the gently vivifying beams of the sun. The soul of a true Christian, as I then wrote in my meditations, appeared like such a little white flower as we see in the spring of the year; low, and humble to the ground, opening its bosom, to receive the pleasant beams of the sun's glory; rejoicing, as it were, in a calm rapture; diffusing around a sweet fragrancy; standing peacefully and lovingly, in the midst of other flowers round about; all in like manner opening their bosoms, to drink in the light of the sun. There was no part of creature holiness that I had so great a sense of its loveliness as humility, brokenness of heart, and poverty of spirit; and there was nothing that I so earnestly longed for. My heart panted after this—to lie low before God, as in the dust; that I might be nothing, and that God might be All."

We shall find a new meaning in the Connecticut valleys and the Berkshire hills, if we think of them as inspiring such pure rapture and aspiration; and no one who is familiar with Emerson can fail to be reminded of his words: "Within every man's thought is a higher thought; within the character he exhibits to-day, a higher character. The youth puts off the illusions of the child; the man puts off the ignorance and tumultuous passions of youth; proceeding thence, puts off the egotism of manhood, and becomes at last a public and universal soul. He is rising to greater heights, but also rising to realities; the other relations and circumstances dying out, he entering deeper into God, God into him, until the last garment of egotism falls, and he is with God; shares the will and immensity of the First Cause. . . ."

Another passage of Emerson's, which seems to me to take up again the strain of Edwards, and to sound it with a deeper note, is this;

"But when, following the invisible steps of thought, we come to inquire, whence is matter? and whereto, many truths arise out of the recesses of consciousness. We learn that the highest is present to the soul of man; that the dread universal essence, which is not wisdom, or love, or beauty, or power, but all in one, and each entirely, is that for which all things exist, and that by which they are; that spirit creates;

that behind nature, throughout nature, spirit is present. As a plant upon the earth, so a man rests upon the bosom of God; he is nourished by unfailing fountains, and draws, at his need, inexhaustible power."

Next to the revelation of American mysticism as already articulate in the genius of Jonathan Edwards, perhaps the most interesting thing in Dr. Riley's book is the fact that a number of American thinkers, with the great Benjamin Franklin at their head, openly professed the Oriental belief in Planetary Spirits. Franklin, and those who thought as he did, held, that the Supreme Eternal could not be personified and conceived as taking a direct, minute interest in this earth of ours, which is but a small planet of one among countless suns, or its inhabitants, who are, as it were, almost imperceptible atoms on the surface of the world. These men logically and consistently asserted their belief that there must be lesser gods appointed to guide and oversee each domain of the cosmos, so that such a planet as ours would have its guardian Planetary Spirit to preside over its destinies. As many of our readers know, the Orient believes profoundly in these delegate gods, and holds that the divine beings who appear as the founders of religions are, in one aspect, the manifestations in human form of the Planetary Spirit, thus incarnated to teach mankind. It is both interesting and inspiring to find this belief openly avowed by the founders of American scientific thought, while at the same time we find the mysticism of the East revealed in the genuinely native genius of such men as Edwards, in the eighteenth century and Emerson in the nineteenth.

We shall look forward with uncommon interest to the appearance of a separate volume on Emerson, from Dr. Riley's pen; and we feel confident that he will do full justice to the lofty insight, the purity of vision, the genuine inspiration of the greatest thinker and seer this New World of ours has yet produced. C. J.

"Little do ye know your own Blessedness; for to travel hopefully is a better thing than to arrive, and the true success is to labour."

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

PRACTICAL OCCULTISM.

"A man can see other people's shortcomings and vices, but he is blind to his own. This arrangement has one advantage: it turns other people into a kind of mirror, in which a man can see clearly everything that is vicious, faulty, ill-bred and loathsome in his own nature; only, it is generally the old story of the dog barking at its own image; it is himself that he sees and not another dog, as he fancies."—Schopenhauer's *Aphorismen zur Lebensweisheit.*

"PRACTICAL OCCULTISM," as a title to these remarks, is something of a delusion and more of a snare. But it serves my purpose—to attract the reader's jaded eye; and it may help to excuse the editor for inserting an article which no one would read if it were labeled literally and exactly.

Now I have been told that my manners are degenerating; and they are not. But the accusation has led me to consider the subject of Manners in general, and particularly the manners of my brother Theosophists. I find that theirs are open to improvement.

Some will say at once that my title is wholly a delusion and that in no case can there be any connection between Manners and Practical Occultism. Such an objection, however, shows a total lack of insight into the origin and purpose of Manners. It is based upon the supposition that good manners are artificial adornments, like rings or scarf-pins; perhaps upon the arch heresy that they are shams, like false hair. I used to know Theosophists—oh, centuries ago—who held that view. Be honest, they would say. Open a door for a woman: Nonsense! If she's a cripple and can't do it for herself, then certainly. But first be sure she is a cripple; otherwise you are only pandering to the Artificiality of the Age, perpetuating the Inequality of the Sexes, making yourself a hypocrite and the woman a fool! But the Theosophists who talked that way are an extinct species. And they were not Occultists: merely raw, unfinished converts to some theosophical dogmas. For what is Occultism, if not the science of right thinking, right feeling, right speaking, and right doing—always at the right time and in the right place? And what are good manners if not the same thing on this plane, on this plane of everyday intercourse? Mark, please, that I include right feeling, for that is where good manners—if they really are good—originate. They are not the product of some twenty-five cent guide to the "Manners and Customs of the New York Five Hundred"; they do not consist of knowing which corner of a card to turn down when you—never mind what! They are the natural, in some rare cases the perfectly spontaneous expression of consideration for others, of kindly consideration for others, of kindly consideration for the feelings—for the physical, mental, and moral feelings—of other people. Where that exists, it is quite unneces-

sary to know the rules of the game. You cannot make a mistake. But there are rules, for those who lack the consideration; and the most essential of these rules were evolved in the Golden Age.

I do not mean that the men and women of the Golden Age held a Congress and discussed the subject. They didn't do things that way in the Golden Age. They just followed their impulses, which happened to be supremely right impulses. The stronger among them just had to help the weaker, saving them unnecessary exertion in a thousand charming and incommunicable ways. And in later times, when the impulses of men went wrong, the friction became so intolerable that the oldest inhabitants recalled the ways of their grandfathers and advised their children to make *their* children imitate the manners of the ancients. It was an experiment, and there were those who said: Let us at least be honest! But the experiment was a success: it oiled the wheels of the social machinery and reduced the friction. Something else was discovered, too, in the course of ages; that polite behavior, assiduously perpetrated, induced polite feeling. So the cultivation of good manners served, and still serves, a dual purpose.

Very few men, and just as few women, are polite by nature, for most of us are either selfish or lazy. To cultivate anything is an effort, and the cultivation of good manners requires a constant effort. *"Tamas,"* then—the word which those of us who knew a little Sanscrit used formerly for the "slothful" quality of Nature—*Tamas* is often responsible for bearishness, particularly when it manifests in the family circle. I have often observed it in others, and I am sure that it does nothing to make home-life agreeable. To treat people with respect keeps alive in them the desire to earn it. Carelessness spells ruin, in private life as well as in business.

Good manners must of course be devoid of ostentation. They must be unobtrusive to be really good. In the relations of the sexes, for instance, publicly to overwhelm a woman with a display of consideration is not considerate, but the reverse. As usual, where feeling is the only sure guide, it is as easy to err in one direction as in the other. But I am sure of one thing: that an Occultist—a real Occultist—is exquisitely courteous always. He could not be anything else. Consider the letters in the *Occult World!* I once met a yogi, a very old man. He was as naked as when he was born, and his manners were quite perfect—so unobtrusive that one did not realize until afterwards how perfect they were.

But he lived in a country where the ordinary garb of yogis—or of some yogis—is their skin. He would not have recommended a similar costume for us. Probably he would have advised what the Rosicrucians of the eighteenth century ordained: that their followers should not dress so as to differentiate themselves from other people. If it was the custom of the time and country to wear long hair, then long hair should be

worn: otherwise not. If it was the custom to look like Anarchists, then look like Anarchists: but otherwise not. I think the motive of the Rosicrucian leaders must have been that their fundamental principles were of more importance than the temporary and superficial application of those principles, and that, in the case of people propagating new ideas, any eccentricity of dress or of behavior would prejudice them in the eyes of the world and would detract from their value as missionaries. Thus, whether they were vegetarians or not I do not know—and I confess to being a rabid vegetarian in idle moments; but if they were I am sure they would have looked upon diet as quite a minor matter and would have been the first to admit that theosophical principles can be applied magnificently (even if uneasily) on a diet of raw beef.

But the last paragraph is a parenthesis on the subject of non-obtrusiveness. "The good walker raises no dust," is perhaps the short of it.

To move without friction; to be harmonious in word and deed: surely this is worth while! And it can be done only at the price of considering the feelings of others in all our relations with them. I know it is immensely difficult, for it requires imagination as well as sympathy. But if we lack these great gifts, we can at least fall back upon the rules of the game, which are based upon ages of experience, and, by adhering to these, make life easier for others and, in time, evoke in ourselves the feelings of which really good manners are the outcome.

X.

"To love is to give. *But often the greatest act of love is shown in* abstention. *To abstain* wisely, IS to give: *the gift is to the* soul *of the other—its freedom of choice."* OCCULT APHORISMS.

BRAHMANISM.

HISTORY has not decided for us the comparative age of ancient Religions. Shall we give precedence in point of time to those of the Hindoos or Persians or of Egypt and Chaldea? We realize the impossibility, at the present stage of knowledge, of any definite assertion upon this point, but we are equally certain that long before our chronological knowledge existed, ages must have passed during which religions known to us in their decline, passed successively through gestative and formative periods, reached their highest capacity, and were slowly resolved back into a crystalized survival of their earliest impulse.

That this impulse was in every case identical is probably true, varying but in outward direction or manifestations. Race history is, after all, only individual history writ large; and the moment comes in individual experience, when after many lives maybe, intellectual evolution succeeds and accompanies physical development, when mind asserts itself and questions arise as to Life's meaning, destiny, death and survival of death, and the reply to each question will depend mainly upon individual idiosyncracy. So in Race Evolution we find that as more complex relations succeed primitive habit, as the intermingling of tribes and peoples follows in orderly sequence, the form of religion changes, and while in every case it has followed the natural order from animism, fetichism, nature-worship, to polytheism, some predominating race idiosyncracy finally determines its national form. The final form of what is called Brahmanism, or in its latest evolution, Hinduism, is simplicity itself, and yet, it is undoubtedly true, that this simplicity is a result of the most complex mental conceptions known to man. *Unity*—One-ness, as distinct from duality, is preëminently Brahmanic, yet this Unity in fact contains Infinite Diversity within itself. It is for this reason that we find under the Religion of Brahmanism, the most contradictory forms and concepts. It relates itself to every aspect of the human intelligence, from the slow dormant interest in the supernatural, common among primitive or debased tribes, to the divine intuition of Infinity, which is the crown and glory of the advanced philosopher. Thus, whilst in the Brahmanic conception of Unity, there is no personal deity, within the vast encircling orbit of this immensity, are all gods, recognizable or conceivable by man. We might say that Brahmanism exhibits in an extreme form, the principle of Life as we know it in natural phenomena, that is to say, in a cohesive attraction which brings opposite elements into form and relates together in transitory imperfection, that which

shall ultimately issue from them as perfect. The all-embracing circle of Infinity includes every atomic irregularity possible in that heterogeneity which represents existence. The One *is,* the universe is only a be-coming.

The form taken on by Infinity in finite expression is ever variable, and thus in all phenomena the Brahmin, whether of to-day or of that ancient religion which we strive to reconstruct as a whole, sees in the transient the eternal, unchanging, immutable One. Realizing this, it becomes possible to comprehend worship as it is shown forth in the Vedas, and to reconcile its limitations with the same worship as given forth in the Upanishads, and the Vedanta. Like the ever-varying forms of a kaleidoscope were human life and natural phenomena to the Brahmins: ever changing, ever reforming, ever dispersing, yet ever within the circle, hence ever One, ever an Infinite Unity.

The long history of Brahmanism is the record of peaceful subjugation of the intellect of a surprisingly subtle people by a single class. The assumption of leadership by the ancient Brahmins cannot have taken place without some protest upon the part of kings, but we have no reliable accounts of such occurrences. References in the early Vedic hymns to the Purohita, or high priest, already foreshadow later authority. The Purohita stood sponsor, as it were, for kingly acts, "May this prayer of mine be successful"; he says, "May the power be perfect and victorious of those whose high Priest I am, I strengthen their weapons, I prosper their kingdom, fly forth, oh arrow! sped by my prayer." He was at once Poet, and Priest; led by him the people followed their king to battle, sure of victory, and he doubtless inspired many of those early hymns which are full of the vigor of a triumphant people. In the Atharva Veda we find the assertion of the priest: "I am the conquering Purohita. Increased is now this prayer (Brahma), the might, the power. Let those who rage against our mighty king sink low with this my prayer. Strike down with pointed arrows the weak bowman, strike with fierce weapons the powerless foe." The Brahmins at that time had but a secondary place, they were the sacrificers, and it was only later, after the conquering Aryans had settled down on the fertile plains of upper India, that they attained the ascendancy which from that day to this they have never lost. The fact that the Vedic Hymns were the product of generations of poet-priests, is in some sort an explanation of the strangely diverse nature of their contents, for we meet in them the simplest outbursts of poetic fervor in Nature worship, and the deepest note of philosophic enquiry and speculation. It is unnecessary to quote extracts to prove this; the fact is well known to the students of Hindoo religion, but the mystery of Brahmanical ascendancy is not altogether explained by it. It must be considered further in relation to the rites and ceremonies which from the earliest period to our own day have formed so

important a part of the religion of India and which served to knit the people together as the Aryans proceeded upon their way southward and eastward, discovering new land, and meeting a people very different in its religious ideals and customs from themselves. The Atharva Veda, being later, in point of time, than the Rig-Veda, throws light upon the progress of priestly supremacy, and shows their ability (a most marked peculiarity, distinguishing we might say the Brahmins of India) in amalgamating religious ideals. We have striking instances of this capacity later in the great epics when myths and legends of contradictory import are welded together into an harmonious whole, and still more strikingly in the Bhagavad Gita in which at least six different philosophies find a marvellous setting, so marvellous, indeed, that it must remain for every student, a very storehouse of inspired teaching.

Much ingenuity has been shown by modern scholars in their attempts to account for all the gods of the Hindoo pantheon, to derive them from various sources, and to find in them traces of Persian or Iranian influence; but as a matter of practical interest, it is of little importance, when we realize that to the Hindoo, everything in nature is a symbol, and the gods of the Vedic pantheon represent this essential characteristic of Hindoo thought, and set it forth plainly enough in such a stanza for example as the often quoted, "They call him Indra, Mitra, Varuna, Agni, and he is the heavenly winged Garutman."

"To what is One the sages give many a title, they call it Agni, Yama, Matariswan."* And in this fact lies the essential difference between the polytheism of the Vedic period, and indeed of many cults in India to-day, and the polytheism of ancient Greece and Rome. The latter represented merely the natural evolution of the human mind in its cruder stages, and died out, or at least lost vitality as civilization progressed, while in India, as Mr. A. C. Lyall has pointed out, behind it lay two impregnable authorities, the caste system interest in the religion, and sacred books containing its philosophy. Thus, it has been possible throughout the entire history of Brahmanism, for two apparently contradictory systems to exist as one, a polytheism, minute in its myriad distinct and opposite deities, and a conception of the One, which is its apparent antithesis. But as we have shown, there is no necessary antithesis in the mind of the Hindoo. His religion is a philosophy in which the whole necessarily is included in the One. Creation itself is only, to his thought, the self-expression of Brahma, is but a result, in myriad phenomenal forms, ever changing, of that which expresses or contains the whole, and as, in the last analysis, that which is continually changing is never for two moments the same, it is in fact, non-real, illusive—Maya—and it becomes therefore of little moment what name you give it. The Brahmin does not chide his disciple for the objects of his worship; his concern is not

*R. V. I. 1646, 46.

with the objective world at all, but with the indwelling God of which all else is but a temporary finite expression. The sincerity of the act of worship become the important point, not the identity of the form of God.

It becomes easy, in such a view, to attach importance to ceremony. In fact it inevitably follows, and in the hands of an ambitious priesthood, sacrifice and ritual would become more and more sacred, and the priest assume by very easy habit the control of all family and neighborhood relationship. We realize this fully from the Atharva Veda and yet more certainly from the Brahmanas; it is evident that from very early days the sacrificial ceremonial was imposing; gifts to the gods were many and frequent, and these gifts were of necessity offered through the priests. The Danastutis or verses extolling the munificence of kingly or princely patrons occur at the end of many hymns, and the sacerdotal order evidently became rich as being an intermediary between the many gods whose favor made wars successful, or attended enterprise of various kinds. As time passed, the custody of the sacred hymns themselves was limited to selected families, and one easily realizes the sanctity which would accompany this trust. The priesthood became to some extent hereditary, or at any rate associated with family relationships, and was regarded as the highest possible profession. A complicated ritual demanded an exclusive education, and we become aware that as the Aryans settled down in India, and generations succeeded who had no actual experience of the initial warfare and disturbance, the hold of the priest became ever closer, and class distinctions, or caste, clearly defined the lowest orders as belonging to an alien race (the Dravidians), and as occupying the position of serfs. Probably it was this social condition, and the desire to maintain the absolute purity of the Brahmanical faith, imperilled by idolatrous association with the Sudras, that led to the formation of an insurmountable barrier between the free Aryans and the subjugated classes. The distinction was emphasized in every way, and added considerably to the power of the priests, who regulated the mutual relations of all classes, in the Dharma sutras which were the prototypes of the Hindoo codes of law. But, as intimated, the greatest source of authority and power lay in the sacrificial ritual. As this became more and more complicated, several orders of priests arose; we have distinct knowledge of the four priests required for the ordinary sacrificial duties, the Adhvarya, who had charge of the material part of the sacrifice, the Udgatri, or chanter of the sacred hymns, the Hotri or reciter of the solemn sacrificial prayers, and chief of all the Brahmin custodian of the sacred knowledge. But while the Vedas, Brahmanas and Upanishads have thoroughly familiarized us with the various priests, and masters of ceremony and ritual, it is probable that no alien has ever really mastered the inner meaning of sacrificial observance, nay more, it is a question whether the Brahmins ever gave the exoteric mean-

ing of their ceremonials even to other priests. The Brahmin himself remained as custodian alike of sacred records, and sacred initiations. The history of Indian religion makes it clear that there has from time immemorial been a treasure house of wisdom behind the sacred texts themselves, and this wisdom has always been carried down orally: not only have the Vedas been memorized in every accent, syllable, and intonation, but that which remained behind them was incommunicable save to the deeply initiated. We have in this fact, at once the excuse for and explanation of the authority of the Brahmin, and it is clear that the spiritual life of India, has been dependent, far more upon the character of her priests than even upon the philosophy of her religious books. That the Brahmanic class has not been wholly faithful to its trust is obvious enough; had the priesthood remained pure and wise, Buddhism and Jainism had never seen the light. But, human nature is not continually at its very best; all religious history, all priestcraft, teach us this, and when sacrifice became, as it very early did, a matter of barter, the first element of decay in spirituality was already active, and we begin to understand how it happened that reformation, rebirth into greater spirituality was brought about not by the Brahmanical teachers, but by eminent members of the Kshatriya class. Theoretically the warriors had nothing to do with religious rites and ceremonies, but the history of Indian thought shows clearly enough that it was from their class that the greater reformers came. Perfunctory and ceremonial ritual are like dead wood in a tree, useless to the owner and ruin to the tree, and Hindoo religion from the very magnitude of its scope has suffered perhaps more than any other from internal decay. It is true that as the Aryans settled down in the spreading plains of the conquered land, the priests had a very hard and thankless task before them, that, namely, of bringing the most abstract philosophic conception of the Diety, which is found in any religion, within the possible understanding of a people absolutely without education and mingling with idolators of the lowest kind. It would seem that two courses were open to them, they could conceal the sacred books and give forth their contents only to the learned, they could in fact have a purely high class religion; or they could attempt an amalgamation. They chose the latter course, as their epics and religious plays testify. They dramatized the natural processes of existence, and in so doing, appealed through symbols to the highly educated, and through myth, fable, and story to the people at large, to that hybrid population which represents an ignorance denser than can be found anywhere in the world. Yet, densely ignorant as the lowest class in India remains, we are confronted by the strange anomaly of the fact that in a country where spirituality is dependent upon knowledge, where Avidya, ignorance, is the great stumbling block in the path of discipleship, the entire population, ignorant and superstitious as it is, is, in the strict sense, spiritualized,

i. e., its main interests are unworldly. Among a people who die like flies in the midst of the grossest superstition, the spiritual leaven works in the ideal of a universal brotherhood. India, debased and depraved by the faithless custodians of her sacred writings, presents to the world the undying life of the Spirit, a spirit moving in the midst of the grossest ignorance and doubtless destined in the far future to reclaim its own.

Viewed from the standpoint of ancient Wisdom, regarded, that is to say, as the effort of long generations of priests to conceal and yet reveal the most secret processes of soul experience, sacrifice and sacrificial observance acquire profound importance. A lifetime would be required to fully understand them, but as, from time to time, presented by scholars, we are able to obtain a superficial idea of their many ramifications. Very early in history we find the direst calamities must befall any one who, for any reason whatever, should curse the Hotar or his actions during the long ceremonial. "For," says the Satapatha Brahmana, 1. 4. 2. "And in like manner when the fire blazes when kindled by means of the kindling verses, so also blazes the priest who knows and recites the kindling verses, for indeed he is unapproachable, unassailable. . . . and if any one were to 'curse' him in like manner as one undergoes suffering on approaching the fire that has been kindled by means of the kindling verses, so also does one undergo suffering for cursing a priest who knows and recites the kindling verses."

Knowledge of the ceremonials was in fact relatively distributed, and as the innermost knowledge was in possession only of the Brahmin himself it became more and more imperative to hedge the sacrificial rite about with minute rule, intonation, utterance. The priesthood enclosed the entire life of the people, and no matter how magnificently the king might reign, how successfully he might govern, between him and the people over whom he reigned, was always the priestly office, the sacrifice, the prayer, the song. Under such conditions, religion in India has always been greater than patriotism. The people have been held in thrall, not to any idea of a united kingdom, or associated kingdoms, but to the conception of an eternal underlying Reality of which they themselves are an integral part. Hence, in the fierce conflicts which from time to time occurred in the earlier period between the priestly class and the warrior class from which sprang the kings, victory of necessity always lay with the priest, for he had his finger upon the very heartbeats of the people—and was in the nature of things sacred. Prajapati, the lord of all creatures (Art. Brah., p. 471), was held to have created divine knowledge and sacrifice for the Brahmins, not for warriors. When a king was anointed he was forced for the time being to lay aside all that related to his experience as warrior, he could not drink the Soma juice until his horse, his chariot, his armor, his bow and arrow, his entire credentials, as it were, were laid aside, and he had taken up temporarily

the sacrificial implements—then only could he enter into his royal contract with Brahma.

When to the sacred power of the priest we add an enormous and ever-increasing wealth we realize at once the influence and temptations of the class as a whole. For each sacrifice the officiating priests demanded "Dakshina" of gold and cattle. We read of one worshipper who gave 85,000 white horses, 10,000 elephants and 80,000 slave girls to the Brahmin who performed a sacrifice for him. Yet, the office of the Brahmin was in itself so set apart, that all outward signs of power were in the hands of the serving priests. Every act was typical and symbolic. We read in the Satapatha Brahmana of an initiatory ceremony, in which the sacrificer's hair and beard is shaved, the hair being first touched with the sacred grass, both the hair and grass being laid in water: his nails are cut, and he then bathes, so as to become pure. He then clothes himself in a new linen garment and is anointed five times for the five seasons, from head to foot with fresh water, his eyes being touched with a reed stalk. When purified by being stroked with one, seven, or twenty-one stalks of sacred grass, he enters the hall of sacrifice, and walks about at the back of the Ahavaniya fire, which faces the east and in front of the Garhapatya fire which faces the west, the altar lying between. "The reason why this passage is made with Soma pressing is this: the fire is the womb of the sacrifice, and the consecrated is the embryo; and the embryo moves about in the womb." Here the symbolism so inherent in Brahmanism is explained, sacrifice is at once, god, man, prayer, or Brahma, the soul, and the correspondence between Brahma and all the emanations from the Infinite one. It is impossible to study the Brahmanas without a realizing sense of the profound fecundity of the human mind; one form has evidently led to another, one conception given birth to a second, so continuously that the pure, simple truth itself has been hopelessly entangled and lost sight of. The religion of the Brahmins was in evident danger of dying of ritual; the ceremonial of the sacrifice was becoming the more important consideration of the priests and people alike, when the dominant spirituality of the East once more asserted itself in the Upanishads, those wonderful writings, which bearing as the Brahmanas do also upon the sacrifice, yet from the opening word, emphasize and yet again emphasize the sacred meaning of the system, the secret ancient wisdom of the true spiritual Life. Nowhere is such pure spirituality to be found as here. In the Vedas man seeks and adores the gods, in the Brahmanas he sacrifices that he may placate them, in the Upanishads, he declares the truth, hid from the beginning, that he is one with them. "Thou art That"—the equivalent of the Christian, "I and the Father." Yet we must remember that this separation in thought was in reality no full separation; at every period of Hindoo history, all these strata of thought existed. In the Vedas we

find philosophy as well as worship, in the Brahmanas we find sincerity of prayer as well as ritual, in the Upanishads we find all three. There is no true division between them.

Undoubtedly in oral tradition, at all times, as to-day, the deeper secrets of the spiritual Life, the inner meaning of the steps of the Path, were given personally to such as sought the teacher and were ready for further Light, and the danger against which all students of Hindoo religion must guard is that of taking *literally* what is intended to be symbolical.

Again Brahmanism was wide reaching in actual geographical space, and the Brahmins, as they came in contact with different zones of a widely scattered country, undoubtedly adapted their teachings to the more urgent needs of their hearers. To them, it was not a matter of great importance under what form God was worshipped, it is not so to-day; nor did they esteem it necessary to give the people any definite historic records: in their place, a vast spiritual evolution was expressed, which could, of necessity, find no beginning or end. Tales of creation we have, it is true, but all such legends, as that of Manu, date back to an immemorial past, are lost in æons of remotest antiquity, and have no practical value. The question of importance to the Hindoo mind, even in the early Vedic days, was of that which antedated the conditioned universe, not how? but why? For what purpose did the universe of creatures, men, angels and gods exist? By prayer, penance and sacrifice man must propitiate the gods: so teach the Vedas, Brahmanas and Laws of Manu, but in these teachings God himself has attained supremacy by sacrifice, man must but follow the example; a life in heavenly worlds, a nearer acquaintance with God's other spheres, will reward him; at worst he will come back again to his own in due time. But after all, after prayer, penance, sacrifice, ritual and ceremonial, there remains the further *Why?* This question the Upanishads answer. "In order," says the seer, "that the soul having separated from its origin may rejoin it": profound, unanswerable reply. Further enquiries may come, must come as to the how—but the why is to the mind of the East forever answered. It was not to prove the fact, that the Upanishads were written, but to expound the method, to throw light upon that long journey to be undertaken ere the soul and its origin, or its Self, shall again be one.

It is easy to realize that such a purely spiritual philosophy was too high for the common people; but we know that when it was restated by Gotama the Buddha in plain language the everyday folk of his time heard it gladly. To understand this people and their actual daily observances one can do better by studying the Law books and later Sutras. The theology of Brahmanism is more or less based upon the text of the Laws of Manu, the most ancient of the compilations, in which the

latest objective gods of popular worship are not recognized. Vishnus' name occurs only once in the entire book and that of Siva not at all; good evidence of its antiquity. It contains the keynote of Brahmanic philosophy, as when it asserts:

"The universe existed in darkness, imperceptible, undefinable, undiscoverable, and undiscovered, as if immersed in sleep.

"Then the self-existing power, undiscovered himself, by making the world discernible, with the fire elements and other principles, appeared in undiminished glory, dispelling the gloom.

"He, whom the mind alone perceives, whose essence eludes the external organs, who has no visible parts, who exists from eternity, even he, the *soul of all beings* shone forth in person."

And yet, the simple everyday needs of the everyday person were carefully considered under various captions, all more or less connected with religious ideals, yet affecting home interests in understood relations; the laws of caste were minutely explained and one entire book relates to women, who must always be dependent, "their fathers protect them in childhood, their husbands protect them in youth, their sons protect them in age. A woman is never fit for independence."

All the early law codes of India make constant reference to the philosophic treatises. The Sutras, which are of legal import, differing from those devoted to ritual, but almost equally religious. The Grtiya Sutra, the Dharma Sutras regulated every change in daily life, for every event, great or small there was an appropriate ceremonial, for every day at least three oblations, for every fortnight and every changing season a sacrifice. Religious formulæ were said over the child as yet unborn, from the moment of birth he was surrounded by observances, at such and such a time his head was shaved, at such and such an hour he was exposed to the sun's rays, at the proper moment invested with the sacred cord. No minutest event was meaningless. So, in his childhood and youth all was prearranged; of sacrifices in connection with him there are no less than forty (the name rite, the eating rite, etc.). Many of these daily sacrifices or rites are still observed in the home of the educated and well-bred Hindoo. Religion thus hemmed life in on every side and these Sutras, so obviously intended to regulate daily conduct, are our best guide to the depth of religious feeling among the people at large.

Instruction in them is for all castes, and the actual results of a popular acceptance of Brahmanical authority are plainly foreshadowed in the precepts which evidently commanded respect. A study of the law books seems to prove conclusively that the people as a people remained far more truly polytheistic than pantheistic, gods, ghosts, demons all play their part, all remain necessary for the vulgar acceptance, all are found even to-day in some parts of the great country of India.

When, then, we attempt to arrive at a general idea of the great power exercised by Brahmanism, both in its pure form and in its latest form as Hinduism, we find it to be in the really analytical character of the teachers of the people; that the Brahmins understood in reality the underlying forces that dominate humanity. The religious instinct was to them the most potent, the most vital, that must be fostered in every way, and must be as universally related as God himself. Thus we have at once an *ex*oteric religion which is universal like sunlight, or air, and an *es*oteric religion which is also universal but in the sense that God himself is such. The one easily becomes particular, it is God expressed in form; the other is and must be both universal and particular, for it is God as man, and man as God.

It is easily comprehensible that if a religion suited to the masses contains vital truths of the souls' life and destiny it must conceal them, but in the light of the theory of reincarnation, this very destiny demands interests of varying intensity.

To the Brahmin the world is a great highway of souls in every stage of development, some mere infants, others on the verge of Wisdom, each in turn to be guided, helped, inspired; and their religion is eminently fitted to meet such needs. That there are many different schools follows as a matter of course. Northern and Southern India present different aspects of the same fundamental concepts. The great Commentaries vary in detail, the Sutras have points of difference, and the superficial enquirer will say that the teachings are self-contradictory; but, in fact, even the philosophic systems, which are mainly known as six, are fundamentally in agreement as the Bhagavad Gita abundantly testifies.

It is hard, perhaps, to reconcile a belief in Hell with one in reincarnation, but that difficulty disappears when it becomes obvious that hells are as temporary and educational as everything else; there is only one Eternal, Immutable, Unchanging Reality, and wherever Hindoo religion is pierced to the core, this One Reality appears as the kernel in the nut, the seed in the fruit, it is the embryo conception, behind every deduction. Caste itself, immoral as it is in its exoteric manifestations, becomes religious in its ideal as representing the age and experience of individual souls journeying on the Eternal Pathway from source to source; and in the very stronghold of ritualistic observance, we are reminded that "*Knowledge* alone gives real immortality; rites give temporary bliss."

There will always, as the Brahmin well knows, be souls demanding temporary bliss; he provides for them, well realizing that these very souls will yet in some future existence hunger and thirst after knowledge and thus acquire wisdom. Despair cannot accompany Brahmanic faith, for every soul issuing forth from Brahma must in the sequence of life's many journeys return to its home. Yet, with all its expansive possi-

bility, Brahmanism remained to the last restricted in thought by the supremacy of its priestly class. The unbeliever had no place, and when a freethinker arose, as happened more than once, the conflict between tradition and the natural evolution of thought was as severe in India as anywhere else, but, strong in the inherent toleration of a universal concept, not so fatal in results. Buddhism and Jainism, and in a lesser degree Sankhya philosophy, were protests against the machinery of priest-craft. But from the earliest days, there had not been wanting resistance to the assumption of holiness by the Brahmins as inseparable from their office. The older Gautama, author of many Sutras, says: "He that has performed the 40 sacraments, and has not the eight good qualities, enters not into union with Brahma, nor with the heaven of Brahma, but he that has performed only a part of the 40 sacraments and has the eight good qualities, enters into union with Brahma." This, in the view of the Brahmins themselves, must have been sheer heresy, but as time passed, which in the history of Brahmanism may mean centuries, many modifications crept in, modifications continually endorsed by the priests themselves, in such a way, that no external revolution, nor even the advent of Buddhism, followed as it was later by Mahomedanism, could shake their inherent hold upon the people.

Perhaps nothing more conclusively testifies to this than the fact that whereas when Islam swept over India, and conquered her thousands of adherents by fire and sword, Buddhism with its viharas and monasteries, yielded its treasures up to devastation, and died out in the very land of its birth, whereas Brahmanism in its continued amalgamating evolution held its own as it does to-day in the face of Christianity.

The reason is not far to seek: it lies in that spiritual knowledge, which, however hidden, is yet obviously taught throughout the length and breadth of the land by the Mahatmas, Sanyasins and Jivan Muktis, and by others who have the wisdom in their own souls to communicate to all who are ready for it.

While such remains the case what does it matter if religion assumes many varied forms; if through the teachings of the great epics, India accepts the trinity of Brahma, Vishnu, Siva? If Krishna, beloved of the soul of India, assumes Christian traits under later dispensations, it does not affect religion, for behind and beyond is Brahma, Atma, the Universal, the Immutable, the One.

It is in the infusion of a higher meaning into every rite, however idolatrous, that the real strength of Brahmanic religion lies; it treats all worships as outward and visible signs of some spiritual truth, and is always ready to explain in what way some particular image is an aspect of universal divinity. All Nature is but a vesture of the indwelling God, and if human nature demands, as assuredly it always must, an objective and transcendent, as well as an immanent deity, there is no obvious

objection. That which is universal, must be both without and within, must even, as it is within man himself, sometimes rise to the Godlike in him, and upon this ground the Brahmin permits the deification of men, no matter what the cult so long as the inner god is recognized by those capable of such recognition. That this universality should lead to abuse is not surprising, nor that one of the most suggestive experiences of the English is India, has been misunderstood by them. Trained to purely objective considerations of life, it is often inconceivable to them that the same people should worship the great deities, Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva as personifying the divine energies, and yet permit side by side with such conceptions, the lower polytheistic gods.

Brahma, Vishnu and Siva represent (as realistic abstractions) creation, preservation, and destruction, or life, growth, death, throughout all existence; they are as it were the keystones of the arch of theology. The great Brahmanic Trinity is interpreted variously as the evolution of the worshipper demands. To the intellectual, Vishnu and Siva represent the course and constitution of matter, but to the still more highly evolved philosopher, accustomed to pure abstractions, all idea of materiality will vanish, for the reality itself exists for those whose souls have been strengthened by long meditation, who perceive the essence, and allow no definite thoughts to interfere with the intuitional perceptions of the soul who is the knower.

Yet all orthodox Hindus worship Vishnu and Siva and many (especially in southern India) worship the Saktis, as the divine forces of preservation, especially the female principle of productiveness—as personified by goddesses, the mates or consorts of Siva and Vishnu. Unfortunately the religious rites in this connection are unclean and disreputable, and nothing lower can be found in the history of Religions that some of the cults devoted to these deities. Even the worship of Krishna is not wholly free from them, and the religion of what is known as the Civaite and Cakta sects is simple obscenity. But, unquestionably, these excesses are not referable to Brahmanism itself, but to older Dravidian cults; they are found among the hill tribes and in the outskirts of civilization and it is, in fact, an injustice to Brahmanic religion to dwell upon such excrescences, yet, in the opinion of those whose study of Indian religion is entitled to respect, the many modern cults are included in the general subject.

There are, however, two distinct systems of worship in modern India, connected with Vishnu and Siva, of which the main point of difference is the appearance of the Deity in human form, as Avatar. Vishnu, according to those who belong to the Vaishnava tradition, has several times reincarnated in order to help humanity, and can be worshipped under these various appearances, while those who worship Siva declare that there have been no Avatars or reincarnations of their god, who remains always pure essence.

The spirit which animates Brahmanism is the direct opposite of that which has dominated Christianity and in lesser degree Buddhism. It is the *non*-proselyting spirit. Brahmanism does not seek converts, and so indifferent is it in this regard, that it remains a fact that foreign residents in India cannot enter its temples. A Hindoo now in America affirms that even Annie Besant, whose later years have been devoted to the cause of Hindoo religions, has never been permitted to attend the temple services, although she is accepted everywhere as a disciple and pupil of the Masters, having been received by them and instructed in occultism. This is in remarkable contrast to the methods of other religious bodies, although Brahmanism can in no true sense be spoken of as a religious body; it is either religion itself in its essential form or nothing. It contains the undying truth of the inseparable connection of the individual with the supreme spirit and however deeply we may analyze its many philosophies (philosophies upon which continual commentaries have refined and refined away statements until there remains what appears to the student mere intangible distinctions), we come always in the last analysis to *the One,* the Immutable, ever encircling Infinity of God. Whether or not this Immutability is expressed as One only, or as Dual, or as Three in One, it remains as final explanation of an ever-changing phenomenal Universe. Such a conception impels and enforces Toleration and a recent Indian publication contains the following explanation by a highly educated Hindoo of this universal spirit of toleration:

"What is the meaning of toleration in the Vedic sense of the word?
"Not that which makes all souls equal, all castes equal and creates a
"confusion worse confounded defeating the providential design. The
"sacred teaching should be adapted to the souls in the order of their
"merit, but not that all souls, ripe or unripe, rude or unrude, barbarous
"or civilized should be adapted at once to the sacred teachings. The
"right toleration is, allowing each soul to stand on its own rung, and
"bidding it see below and see above and understand that it has got over
"so many rungs, and that there are so many rungs to be got over still.
"The ladder is tremendously high. But if you should advise that soul
"that its rung is false and that your own rung, say several steps above
"the former, is true, and that it should get at once to your rung, is it
"possible or conceivable to jump over at once several intermediate rungs?
"co-existing souls the Perfect Lord has fixed the corresponding number
"In perfect concordance with the multifarious merits of the myriads of
"of stages of religion."

No other religion has so successfully carried out its fundamental principle. We may call this religion Pantheism if we like; becoming Monism in its later scientific phases and adaptations. It matters little; it is in fact Universal; it is all things to all men; it is the Vesture, if we may borrow its own expression, of the Immanent God. At the same

time, it must not be supposed that this most tolerant faith would allow itself to be overcome by a mere proselytizing religion. All missionary experience demonstrates the contrary—in one instance only has Brahmanism succumbed, in the case namely of Islam, but, here, hand in hand with an alien faith, was an armed force strong enough to impose its decrees, and in certain aspects as religious as the faith it replaced, and it offered to the lower castes an escape from the penalties of their condition impossible in Brahmanism. T. W. Arnold, whose study of religious conditions in India is well known, explains it in the following passage:

"The insults and contempt heaped upon the lower castes in India "by their co-religionists, and the impossible obstacles placed in the way "of any member of these castes desiring to better his condition, show up "in striking contrast the benefits of a religious system which has no out-"casts and gives free scope for the indulgence of any ambition. The "tyranny of caste interference is very oppressive. To give one instance: "In Travancore (West coast of India) certain of the lower castes may not "come nearer than seventy-five paces to a Brahmin and have to make "a grunting noise as they pass along the road to give notice of their "approach."

Religious toleration is not extended to the practical relations of life, and this failure results in the successful propaganda of Mohamedanism, but not of Christianity, for the obvious reason that British caste feeling is as strong socially as Brahmanic caste is in religion. Such conditions only emphasize the anomaly of a perfectly tolerant belief, and a perfectly intolerable practice, but in spite of it, admiration must always be felt for the spiritual principles underlying Hindoo religion, and the wonderfully complete systems of ethics which from the earliest period have accompanied it.

Above all the secret force of Eastern religion lies in its mysticism. We live in an anti-mystic age, and in our Western world are always demanding explanation and satisfaction for the intellect. Brahmanism (with the exception of Buddhism), the most intellectual of all faiths, persistently relegates the intellect to a secondary place. Neither Christianity nor Islam asserts the supremacy of the Soul in the same way, although both have developed Mysticism in an extreme form. But the mysticism of India claims, and makes good its claim, to inner knowledge of the nature of the Soul, and of its superiority to the Intellect. To it the mind is but another instrument, intended, as are the senses, to synthesize experience, but above and beyond both stands the Soul looking on at life and knowing all things. Thus, from the first, the religion of India has carried on its work in two distinct ways, exoterically in that outer worship in which the people may retain their innumerable deities, their images, their miracles, their sacrifices, their rites, their creeds, if they ever formulated them (which, however, no Hindoo willingly does), and

esoterically in that inner teaching of planes of consciousness, of different vestures or vehicles of the divine, of the Soul itself as knower, perceiver and container of all things.

There are no formal creeds, no professions, hence persecutions and religious wars are unknown; the outward form was always unimportant, the only essential being the inner truth known only to the few.

If we desire to put into one sentence the innermost secret of Brahmanic belief we may say that it is the certain conviction of a Spiritual Evolution, underlying all material evolution. A phase of intellectuality so convincing that it contains and explains all mystery, all contradictory experiences in life, and gives a solution, always ready, of the ever-varying anomalies in actual experience. Its exoteric expression is the belief in reincarnation, its esoteric import is the search for union. Exoterically it accepts all phenomena, for even science can present its facts and find acceptance; esoterically it teaches those inner paths of the search for Wisdom, which we may call spiritual experiences. To give the explanation of spiritual experiences, of the awakening of the soul from the sleep in matter, is the work of those teachers who are to be found scattered throughout India, and who vary in attainment, in accordance with their individual opportunities. They are "to be found everywhere," yes, but only if faithfully sought; and among them are often those who, having attained full enlightenment, are devoting their remaining years to the instruction of those who find them. To them are known the divine secrets, the true Way, the object and the end of the Search, they stand as guides far more truly than the priests, having outlived forms and the necessity for them. Few comparatively are those who, having found them, persevere in the quest for hidden Wisdom for its own sake; the vast majority of men are timid and ignorant, desiring only salvation and protection from the powers and influences by which every Hindoo conceives himself to be surrounded.

It is impossible to foresee the future of Brahmanic religion. Will its insidious priestcraft yield to Western common sense views of life? Or will its dominant spirituality override the limitations of its external religious observance and in its turn subjugate the intellectual pride of its conquerors? The Brahmins have shown, through centuries of kaleidoscopic relations with the old races of India, an amazing capacity for amalgamating old and new beliefs, but in the present state of affairs the Hindoo, with his vague intuitional conceptions, finds himself in contact with an intense practicality; he who would live in an Eternal evolution is met at every moment of his existence by the stringent laws and requirements of those whose codes are made for time. The Indian Mutiny was the reply of the superstition of an ancient race to the requirements of a modern people, and later experiences have again and again warned the British that the same inherent protest exists for any lack of

respect shown native religious observance. The Hindoo mind is above all else transcendental; it will never limit itself to practical necessity nor to sensual demands, never awaken to a feeling of loyalty to those who ignore its ideals, but, judging by many recent publications by the highly educated Hindoos of our time, it would seem as if the amalgamation of the spiritual ideals of India and the best ethical teachings of Christianity (which after all are but those of ancient Hindoo religion) may bring about a better system and lessen the hold of the priesthood without lowering the conceptions of the people.

J. E. R. R.

"Will not a tiny speck very close to our vision blot out the glory of the world, and leave only a margin by which we see the blot? I know no speck so troublesome as self." GEORGE ELIOT.

"The responsibility of tolerance lies with those who have the wider vision." GEORGE ELIOT.

RECOLLECTION.

WHAT is so often the one thing wanting to a devout person desiring to follow the Path? Simply to be *reminded* of it. But how, in the midst of our worldly occupations, can we constantly remember those things which we seek? Is it indeed so difficult? Are we not always mindful during the day of a pleasure to come in the night? Do we need to make an effort of will to remember this? No. What, then, is this Recollection that seems so perplexing? David tells us, "I have set the Lord always before me." Surely this is plain enough. "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you," therefore gather yourself together; withdraw into the depths of your hidden self and dwell there. St. Theresa made, as she said, a little oratory within her heart, where she could always keep up the service of her dear Lord, and to which she could perpetually fly amid the disturbing activity of the outer life.

There is an exoteric and an esoteric Recollection. The exoteric is the result of persistent efforts of will, in which the mind, swayed by interior volition, is trained to keep one thought constantly in the foreground. This is the first great step, and the most difficult to attain. It means constant attention and repeated renewal of effort. A good way to commence is to set aside a time every day, and deliberately to retire within yourself. This will renew the strength exhausted by frequent failures. If the natural levity and instability of your mind leads to endless distractions, and if you are continually losing hold of this precious Recollection, do not be disheartened. Instead, use the very time otherwise spent in discouragement, in recollecting anew, and you will gain fresh inspiration.

St. Augustine has said that they are blessed of all men whose life is a continual prayer. Therefore pray—and pray incessantly. This will keep your mind pure, and purity of thought is of primary importance for the attainment of true Recollection. One great help to this end is to have a store of uplifting thoughts ever at hand. Learn by heart texts from the Scriptures, or from holy or religious books. It is surprising how the application of these passages to the many idle moments, such as dressing and undressing, lying awake at night, etc., restrains the mind from drifting aimlessly, and starts a train of righteous and profitable thoughts.

Recollection is, however, only partly a mental process. The esoteric, from which the exoteric is derived, is quite different, and transcends the

latter as the ideal transcends the practical. In the beginning it will be necessary to make a conscious effort of will to bring back the wandering thoughts, but presently a new feeling will arise, that predominates over all, and expresses peace and a powerful desire to do the just and right thing. This feeling is unceasing, and acts as an undercurrent to every thought, word, or act. This is true Recollection. Thus you enter into immediate relations with the "still, small voice," and this voice directs your consciousness toward the purest and highest motives of which you are capable.

What can be more uplifting? It is not hard. It does not even take long. A little effort of will, animated by the right spirit, during the daily events of domestic or business life, and continued steadfastly for a short while, will change the entire motive of your life. It will be purer, holier, and, in fact, dedicated to God.

There is one great principle which must always be remembered from the start, and that is to persevere always. Nothing will be accomplished if these daily efforts are languidly, mechanically, or incompletely made. Fire, energy, and resolution must always be maintained. This will be difficult, but "where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." That which can be had by little work, is worth but little. Therefore, the more you strive for incessant Recollection, the greater will be the reward when the goal is reached. If you should carry a wheel up a hill-side, and, half way up, should for a very brief instant loose your hold, the wheel would shortly have reached the valley again, and all your work would have been useless. You would consider this a very foolish act in daily life, but why not apply this wisdom to your religious life? Is it not as important?

Recollection and Prayer are the same, for Recollection is a form of Prayer. If you make it a habit to pray before commencing every duty, that duty will be far better and more completely performed. How can you deliberately sin, after asking God to help you? You will make mistakes undoubtedly, but that you should commit a fault in the very face of God is inconceivable. Watch yourself, renew your spirit after each failure, and keep ever before you the underlying motives; and you will live a life in accord with the Divine Will, and at peace with all your brethren.

A. G.

THE HABIT OF SWEARING.

THE habit of swearing is under a ban. It is to be heard, however, within certain limits, anywhere, and so curious a habit is it and so marked in character that its study becomes interesting and possible.

As a form of words swearing is ejaculatory. Its central syllable, most frequently repeated, is *damn* and this, without farther quotation, serves as a point from which to discover the usage and meaning of what we hear.

The child is taught that he must not swear. Born into a world where oaths of all degrees are in vogue, he is taught "The Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain." By all that is holiest he is shown that to swear is, first of all an offense against Deity and next, that words, as used in human life, are both bad and good and that he, as a child, is forbidden by parental authority, by polite usage and by fear of displeasing his Creator to use "bad words." So, with the child, we try to start right—this right being consideration for the good of life—and to give early safeguard against what we tacitly acknowledge will be one of his special temptations. For evidently man at large inclines to swear and evidently many children, though well-taught, upon hearing oaths throw aside teaching and follow the inclination to swear themselves.

We refer the child to the authority that we hold to be the greatest—to the Divine command as to the use of the Great Name; and this we do because oaths in full are a use of that Holy Name.

All men feel that they have direct relation to God. As all men look straight to the Sun, regardless of what lies between, winds, vapor, gas, ether, so human souls look to their Cause and Source of Being. This relation, which is recognition, is fostered by all that is fundamental in what we call religious teaching. The Father gives invitation. "If with all your hearts ye truly seek Me," and prophet and people have replied—"Unto Thee will I cry, O Lord," "The Lord is my shepherd," "Come and let us return unto the Lord," "Our Father who art in the Heavens." In any church, with any people the way from man to God is open; the will of man alone is required as means of access.

This nearness and openness of way to the Great Name throws upon man the choice as to when and how he will go up and down from his own life to the Great Life that encloses and infills his being as a soul

upon this planet. It is as he pleases; still, by Psalm and Gospel, prayer and priest he is cautioned not to go "in vain." In the ever-present tense, with reverence and worship, following the phrase dictated in the prayer of prayers, we are taught to say—"Hallowed be Thy Name."

But the habit of swearing has worn a path otherwise. For, in full, to swear is to begin with the Name and to end with the soul of man. To damn is to injure, to blight, to hinder, to wish evil to. It is a prayer to God, an evil prayer. Maledicite!

So we get the points for this habit of the curse, and find them to be threefold—a soul on earth, God above and within, and again, on this human plane, a fellow soul, or a creature, or conditions, or a thing.

To begin with the first point, that of human presence—if a man breathes, he lives, he is here; if he has ceased to breathe he has gone elsewhere and his actions, no longer those of earth, concern us not. By this token of the breath it is that we know most of man. It is his most interior sign of vitality. Upon it all his life, within and without, depends for maintenance and continuance of itself. In this breathing life the commonest action is that of speech. If we turn to the history of life we read that "In the beginning"—"The Word was with God and the Word was God." In human life, by the law of birth, which, under God, shows our Divine relationship, the Word of man comes with him and however he shapes it the Word here spoken is man himself, and stands as his own best self-revelation. Our earliest effort and our last is to speak. All day do we use words as a means to convey to others our feelings and thoughts and even to aid our actions, and our words, fleeting in sound are yet in effect enduring, immortal. "Winged words" flung with volume of energy, they record themselves in vibration that generations may repeat.

Our Word is a form of energy. With every breath we draw we take to ourselves from its Source, this energy, this vital essence that makes us living beings, and, once taken from the great supply, that breath of energy is absolutely and essentially our own. For the moment too, fresh and new, it is ours to hold, to control, to stamp with any character of act or of words; to send out to any usage, good or ill. It comes, the strength of life universal; it goes bearing the individual character that we have impressed upon it, flying forth as a word to represent and to reveal what character was hidden within us.

In itself energy is divine—the Divine in the human, pure and simple. Its use rests with us and this energy may at the moment be made to assume any form. It goes as we send it, yet, as a glass of water given to a traveller is a part of the well from whence it came, so our word is still our own and stands, with relationship unbroken, as a sign of us wherever it may be sent. Because of this inextinguishable quality of the force born within us and because of this law of relation in life comes

responsibility in speech—concerning which we have, through time, had teaching manifold. As Chaucer says:

"The firste vertue, sone, if thou wilt lere
Is to restreine and kepen wel thy tonge."

Virtue is that which makes a man. If we can think of ourselves as a body of elements, magnetic, electric and radio-active we can see that balance is our first requisite. For this we must have insight as to our own ideal of what we want to produce and accomplish in the world and we should also perceive and be clear as to the effects that, by living, we do produce in the world of things and of men. We should live from intention.

Now a curse, in intention, is a cause from which evil results are to spring. It may not be so recognized; it may not have strength to carry far, it may only recoil to empoison its own source. And those who swear easily disclaim intention. It is the "letting off of steam." But science looks us in the eye. Speech is significant; life is vibration; and the spasms that call for relief in oaths of varying degrees, when traced to their source are found to originate in that malign quality we call hate.

That there is also an amusing side to swearing no one with love of humor or sensitive to dramatic or literary phases of life's expression would for a moment deny. The element of impotence revealing itself in a flood of curses makes a bystander laugh; the mistress laughs at Bridget throwing salt, with her objurgative "bad cess to ye;" the scene in *Tristram Shandy* of Dr. Slop, who has cut his thumb, being told that "small curses—are but so much waste of our strength and soul's health to no manner of purpose" and being set to read aloud a Latin Church malediction with the aside—"Our armies swore terribly in Flanders," cried my uncle Toby, "but nothing to this;" the cursing historic, in tales of old, the oaths of doughty admirals and Spanish buccaneers, showing the daring heart, the mettle high and authority over men—all these present themselves in literary and dramatic form, and as aspects of comedy are used to suggest manners of life and to provoke a smile rather than to emphasize disapproval.

There is indeed the oath in its sacred aspect, and this both permits and compels appeal to God. Here nothing less than Deity, the Source of being could serve us. We go to Origin, than which nothing can be greater. This use of the oath is by concurrence the practice of nations. By it contracts are made and all sacred promise given as to truth and honor in the life; these being born of man's best ideals, and having in view ends that God and man may approve. But this is by itself in the good order of life, and, while men may be true or false under oath, the oath itself is an ordinance of value.

In common profanity, to follow its course a little farther, it is said that swearing means nothing, that it is only a form of words, a phrase crystallized by custom, that it relieves nervous irritation, that it intends no harm to one sworn at. "It's just a habit." But of what? "Follow the thought that you are thinking to its result," said Swami Vivekananda, "and you will discover what it is that you are thinking." Follow a curse from man to man, from origin to fulfilment and to what does it lead?

To swear at persons or things is to arrogate to one's self authority—the right of appeal to the Most High for purposes of destruction or injury to life. Yet all men are souls, spirits of life sent out from the Great Spirit, sharers of the One Great Life, however they, at this present moment, as to degrees of evolution, may differ; and for our conduct of life here together we have the brief and acknowledged precepts—to love God supremely and thy "neighbor as thyself." The two are inseparable. Love to God can only be shown through love to man. Not personal affection is this "love," but regard for life, the gift of God, as man's common possession. In this idea we have the sense of protection; but in the curse we have desecration—the profaning of things that in Divine intention are harmonious and strong.

In every-day-profanity we are, by means of man's Word, creators of enmity, resentment, hatred and malice—vibrations of malign intention; and these though wearing the guise of force and might are cowardly, for they are flung abroad, not fairly, but when a man is low in the scale of relative position and when being in subjection, or absent, he cannot reply. The horse cannot reply. Workmen do not audibly swear back at one in authority. There is, however, a reply, a conclusion. By one who sometimes sees with "second sight" it has been said, "One who swears creates an atmosphere into which evil influences hasten to come. The air that carries an oath carries poisons that afflict the soul and injure the body, especially the blood. And this poison affects the one who swears more than the one who is sworn at. It is a chemical action."

This brings us to the old saying that "curses, like chickens, come home to roost." The law of energy is transmutation. Present and active it must have some form to wear, a form whereby it can display the thought from whence it came. This creative activity is incessant. It has been said, "A living thing seeks above all to discharge its strength." The strength of life makes our restlessness. It carries with it its own ideal which is expression—the sending forth of energy, as it is received, into some form that can go out among men, be seen and known, taken up by others and woven into the work of the world. All day we build, we cut, we sew, we plan, devise and execute. By our work we "convert essence into things," and by the process we make life representative of ourselves. The movement of life, in this creative activity, is twofold. It is action and reaction. There, in the world, is our work, good or poor,

and here, within ourselves, are the results, made manifest to us through our exaltation or our distress of heart and mind as we contemplate or are forced to recognize the effects that, by our handling of life, we have produced. We live, in truth, and take interest in our existence here, in nature and with our fellows, because of this law of the return of life to ourselves. The child throws his ball that it may come back; the farmer plants his seed that seed may come back to his hands. In this activity of life, achievement stands outside where all may see and judge it, but intention and the will from which anything is created, these remain within ourselves. We feel their quality and power and understand that, as sources of action, they indicate and outline the path by which life goes and comes—the path of outgo, the path of return, in the making of character; in comparison to which visible accomplishment in the world is as nothing. Doubtless before life is done with us we shall come to understand this—that responsibility lies in intention, first of all; and since within we have strength unused and conscience, which is knowledge of right and wrong, we have in reality no excuse for weakness as a "habit." And so, in this habit of swearing, we come again to intention and to its expression in the word of man.

In any study of life it is better to seek light than darkness; better to see what to do than to rehearse what is done. Yet the fact is notable that where some twenty-five years ago swearing was confined to a few tongues and to occasion, it now is heard constantly and as a habit of speech. For instance, one-half hour: before Berkeley Lyceum, boys, not of the slums, in rage insensate, cursing by holiest names coupled with expletives of vulgarity. At the Avenues, at Broadway, men with men and men with women, repeating the names of God and of Jesus, hotly, in anger, or quietly along the way damning, damning the head, the luck, the soul of man. Ah! this "better class," smooth, prosperous, young, with garments—and flowers—"for because of swearing the land mourneth, the pleasant places of the wilderness are dried up and their course is evil and their force is not right." Follow for one moment the prophet's symbolic phrase; think of those "pleasant places of the wilderness" of human power as yet unexpressed, fertile yet untilled, awaiting our touch to respond, under God, as soil beneath the sun in goodness of heaven and earth, yet "dried" by the fever of hate, with "their force," when it does appear in life, "not right"—and if not right then wrong.

In this we stand arraigned at the bar of our own intelligence. To say that in such use of words there is no real intention of actual ill to others is but to disclose a weakness and poverty of perception and will that is in itself a sin; because energy, the breath of life, in its coming, awakens to consciousness life's ideal and desire; and to balk it of its true expression and, in its outgo from ourselves as individuals, by our will to set it to low usage, is an intimate form of wrong-doing. Weak-

ness of intention does not clear us here. All is choice, with men as they speak and with women who with willingness hear, or in loyalty to life refuse to hear profanity from those beside them. And since we are so free we should be honest and hide behind no subterfuge. If we are a profane people why not acknowledge it and either change our habit or let it lead on to farther weakness.

For, in speech, profanity is weakness. It is resorted to with the idea of emphasis, but in truth it destroys vigor of speech. It fills space with sound powerless to awaken thought in others. To an inferior who hears it may seem threatening, but on the part of him who speaks, it is a sign of lack of the quiet, concentrated, well-aimed, convincing power of mind that at will can clothe itself in English good and true. It is desecration to man's Word, it is folly for the mind, blight for the soul.

And here for commentary upon us we may read some verses of Ecclesiasticus XXIII with its beautiful opening appeal, "O Lord, Father and Governor of all my whole life."

This habit of swearing it is true is still under certain restrictions. In literature, however realistic the incident, there is an established agreement that the author shall suggest rather than quote a fit of swearing, using some smothered or indicated ejaculation that shall not be too much for the printed page. For swearing is under a ban. Not before children, not in general society, not at women, not in church nor at public meetings, not publicly in art, music, poetry, the drama, may it be heard. Yet in the heart it rises, a seething of hate toward life, or luck, or things, or servitors, or enemies, an ebullition of irritated nerves, a malediction lying just within the lips, a word—"Yes, and words, if they are not watched, will do deadly work sometimes"—even though flung out from habit and professedly as meaningless.

But to the thoughtful the vital question is how to stop. How drop a habit so interwoven with daily speech as to have become almost automatic.

Marcus Aurelius says, "Look within. Within is the fountain of good and it will ever bubble up, if thou wilt ever dig." Modern psychology teaches that "man is a spiritual being," that, as a whole, apart from minor degrees of being, he has two minds, the objective or outer mind, that looks out and is creative externally, and the subjective or inner mind that, with recognition, looks in to the spirit of life and is creative of ideals. The subjective mind deals with energy, transmuting it into thought, and individual progress consists in ability to make the two minds work together—the outer mind held in accord with the inner and not allowed to be disobedient to what the inner dictates. This imperative position, as has been well said, is of great value, especially as we first turn to look within. Suggest to your objective mind: "I am your

master, and you are my servant, my instrument, and you must obey me." —"Separate yourself from your objective mind in thought.—Realize that you are separate from and superior to it; treat it as if it were a child entrusted to your care by Deity to educate and enlighten."

This is a good preface to new growth. We see both the difficulty of this control and its possibility for we observe that the outer mind is flighty, nervous and easily influenced, while deep within us lies our ideal of what life should be—our real desire. All this Saint Paul has told us. (Romans VI. 14-25). Yet with an old habit we may "deliver" us by a new use of energy. There is but one way for us; there is no going back; we must go on. New breath comes every instant. What to do with energy new-born becomes our only question.

As to the past, to quote Martin Luther—"The best repentance is to do so no more." To be done with swearing one must first wish at heart to be done with it. After that real choice made for the sake of life and by the heart, there should be no looking back. "Let the dead past bury its dead," for in this lies wisdom. Sad indeed is the estate in which remorse for real wrong is impossible. By its token in the life comes salvation. But beyond its single bitter hour, which is salutary, being recognition that by use of our own power we have hurt the Great Life that is Power in larger expression of Itself, we should deny ourselves the luxury of grief and go on. This is best for life; for life it is that calls and calls and must not be despoiled of its birthright—the energy of *now*.

Also, in obedience, let us "Resist not evil." Waste no time in barricading that old path along which curses were wont to fly, but, with intention, turn to the hewing out a new one. Be busy with the realization of new life, decisive as to its instant usage, formative as to its action and its Word. Find some new good thing to say. Let hate die its own death. Give the heart a new ideal; a deeper sense of life as a power in hand to work with. For, as to old habit, deprived of new energy, it dies. Not at once. It will curse and swear. Be not shocked to hear it or to feel its poison surging through the blood. Let it alone. It is an old habit, with the growth of centuries behind your use of it, and death may be slow. But give no heed and spend no time in watching it die. For the breath of energy directed to such watching becomes, to the evil taint in us, as its own new breath of life. Neglect is the better cure—the way to extinction. And what we thus leave to the Spirit, the Holy Spirit will take up and accomplish for us—for, "lo! I am with you, alway, even to the end of the world."

As the study of life, its reality and its modes of action, leads us to look within, we are brought still again to the value of intention. With a bad habit the intention must be first that it happens no more; and following upon that must come the intention to forget it. The failure of

yesterday is too great a load for the Spirit of life to carry. We must live a new life with all force set straight thereto and by this pathway of new intention the will, sent out in good words, humanely spoken, will hold the attention; and with attention withdrawn and energy withheld the ferment of nerves and execration of life will die. All day long the life within seeks to sustain its equilibrium. This is its instinct. The successful man is he who can let that instinct prevail and save himself from break in the equable outflow of his own power. To work with that desire for balance is to quicken and increase it and to maintain serenity is, of itself, the killing out of desire to swear—because swearing is at heart more weakness and lack of control than actual hatred of life and love of injury. Indeed in its true estimate swearing is little more than a physical habit, born who can say how, but through ages grown in volume along some line of inheritance.

Here then it lies, on the outer edge, far from life's center, a negative process condemned by judgment as one of the things that, in the light of knowledge, we do not wish to do and arising often, since many a good man swears, from lack of thought. For to look at life in its greatness is to desire to do it honor. To comprehend man's Word in its creative value is to hold it sacred to good and beauty. Then by wisdom enlightened, as those who have had use of gold bear it home with increase, do we in loyalty bear this breathing energy on to "God, who is our home," holding it consciously to noble ends that He thereby may have of us, not loss, but rightful growth of His entrusted power. M. P.

"Maintain a perfect unity in every movement of your will."

"When the perfect man employs his mind, it is a mirror. It conducts nothing and anticipates nothing; it responds to what is before it, but does not retain it. Thus he is able to deal successfully with all things, and injures none."—The Writings of KWANG-TSZE in "The Texts of Tâoism," Vol. I, pp. 209, 266.

ELEMENTARY ARTICLES

II.

Theosophy and the Personal Life.

DEAR FRIEND: In my last letter I tried to show you how, in a general way, theosophy could be applied to everyday life, now I want to give you one or two suggestions as to its application to the personal life.

Every religion and every philosophy professes to be a guide, and to supply an ideal for the personal life, and theosophy being both a philosophy and a religion should also supply this need.

In my opinion its ideal is the most perfect, and as a guide to the attainment of that ideal, it has no superior among the religions and philosophies with which I am acquainted.

Some philosophies, and some religions too, set before you a picture of what a man should strive to be, but give no help to the realization of this perfect life. Theosophy gives us a knowledge of man's constitution and the relationship of the different parts to each other, and tells us the ideal is to develop the whole being into power and activity; to train every part into subordination and harmony; to enrich every part and the whole with whatever is generous, genial and beautiful. That is, every part must be co-ordinated, kept in regulated activity, in order that character may have infinite variety, power, endurance and beauty. There can be no perfection without symmetry, so all these excellencies must be well proportioned and well balanced.

In order to reach this ideal we must do our duty everywhere. The circumstances of life in which we find ourselves are the best for us and will help us more than any other circumstances could, if we are living to perfect character, and not for selfishness, power and ambition, or for merely material gain.

When the instincts and passions of the animal (desire) nature predominate and give tone to character, men are always sensual, for they live by the force of their material organization.

But as men come under better influences there is developed a mixed character in which material force alternates with higher and better feel-

ings. Under great excitement the physical qualities predominate; but in quiet times and when away from temptation, there grow up milder influences and nobler sentiments. The result is that there is an occasional outburst of feeling, and also an occasional experience of sweetness and peace. There are alternating conditions of mind which result in great strife and conflict between the higher and the lower nature.

The majority of civilized men live in this intermediate condition in which the animal is not predominant, and in which the spiritual is not supreme, but in which sometimes one and sometimes the other rules.

But there is a higher state in which the spiritual sentiments completely rule. Then the higher qualities give tone and expression to the whole life, and the man seems to be surrounded with an atmosphere of peace and goodness, and the character is marked by strength in gentleness, by courage in sweetness, by will without obstinacy, and self-confidence without conceit. In short the spiritual becomes supreme in authority, and that which makes us *men,* and not that which makes us animals gives color and tone to the whole life and character.

This is the ideal character that the practical application of theosophy to the personal life leads us to. Let a man become harmonious by giving the sway to the higher nature and every part of him adds to his strength and to his richness. A perfect man is perfect in the physical, social, intellectual and moral parts, and all the lower serves the higher, and this higher predominating, gives an atmosphere of great peace and great power. When there is fulness, fineness and harmony of the parts we have perfection.

There are some things that help to this perfect life, and there are some things that hinder, and Theosophy is a safe guide in these matters.

It helps us by its teaching to overcome the things that hinder, and how to make use of the things that help, and especially does it enable us to take the help of the spiritual side of life.

As the root of the tree is buried in the soil, while the top is embosomed in sunlight, and the tree grows by a double force—by that which is above it and by that which is beneath it; so man may grow by the top in luminous spiritual ether, and by the body in contact with the world and natural laws.

He must look out for what is needful in the bodily sphere, and by meditation must bring himself into communion with the invisible. Both are needed and he must learn to see with both eyes, the physical and the spiritual. We must use both these forces to develop a higher character.

The Theosophist is a practical mystic. He is not an ascetic, but neither wealth, fame, pleasure, nor power can be his supreme ideal. He can enjoy all these, but makes these and all other things help to build up character. The lower he subordinates to the higher. If the temper

be naturally fiery, he controls it by transforming it. If the heart be filled with corroding envy or cold selfishness or self-conceit, these must be cast out and brotherly love must rule, for that is the heart of Theosophy. In order to do this the two sources of help must be used—he must obey the laws of his physical organization, and he must seek the help of the higher self through meditation. We, none of us are living as well as we desire to live, but we must keep the higher ideal before us.

No one can suddenly get the power to control and guide the lower nature. In the battle he will often be defeated. A young artist might as well expect to carve or paint the highest works of art, or the horticulturist to produce rich, ripe fruit in a day after he plants his trees, as a man to expect the higher self to subdue and train the lower self at once.

Life is an education. The past of our lives, too, is often against us, and that means a battle. Our present surroundings are distinctly unfavorable, and that means another conflict. Then, too, we must remember that we are so unskillful and so feeble in moral power, and the desire nature in us is so strong, that constant vigilance and strife are necessary.

I have already said there are two sources of help for us. We may restrain the lower by careful attention to diet and physical exercise, avoiding some of the things which disturb and irritate. But there is another source of help that is commonly left unused. By meditation and by opening the soul to the spiritual, we may in time gain full control of the lower nature, and build up a strong, noble character, with body, mind and soul in perfect harmony.

The fiery temper may be subdued; the cold selfishness and pride replaced by brotherly love and devoted self-forgetting service. The bitter envy and jealousy may all be cast out. But this can not be done in a hurry, for life is a growth and all growths have their special foes, and this is true of the growth of character.

There are enemies to bud and blossom, to the fruit in its earlier and later stages, and the process of growth to perfection is slow.

In like manner the ripe fruit of character is not suddenly created, but is the product of a slow evolution, with enemies at every stage of growth. But Theosophy gives us the secret of growth and opens the door to influences that wonderfully help in this ripening process, such help as we never had before, not help to eradicate the lower feelings, but to transform them so that they may give force and intensity, variety and richness to the intellectual, social and moral powers. It must be control and not crucifixion; self government and not extinction, is the Theosophical law.

There is prevalent an erroneous idea that we meet almost everywhere, namely, that in order to be good and enfold this noble character a man must have nothing to do. But the fact is that men who have

nothing to do are seldom very good, while the man who keeps busy, can best become a good man—"Devotion through action" is the Theosophical teaching.

People ask how they can control wandering thoughts and vagrant imaginations, and the reply is use your thought and imagination for definite purposes—keep busy. The man who is kept busy from morning until night, has a better chance than the man who has nothing to do. We can train ourselves to live harmoniously with our physical, social and civic conditions, and also with our spiritual conditions. Morbid conditions of body, insure darkness of mind. Whatever mars bodily health, producing aches and pains, also causes irritation, and draws a man's thoughts in upon himself, making him think of himself in some

Diet can help as it can hinder, and plain living and high thinking go together. Neither asceticism nor its opposite are approved by Theosmean relation to what is going on outside of him.
ophy. Irregularities in diet—overeating and undereating—are the causes of jealousies, obscurations and difficulties of a thousand kinds. The use of alcohol as a beverage is not wise, safe or profitable, and no one can become a great Theosophist who uses stimulants, for they disturb the equipoise of the mind and do serious damage to the higher faculties of the brain.

In order to be clear-headed and happy it is necessary to leave these things alone. Excessive pleasures, or anything that exhausts by the excessive use of nerve force, brings on darkness of mind and hinders our attainment of perfect peace and power. But to the man who is wholesome, in the full power of health, and sensitive in every part, spiritual things are real.

So self-denial is a good investment and it pays good interest. I look out of my study window on to the public school playground. Here eight hundred boys and girls have a glorious time during recess twice a day. But when the fifteen minutes is up, one of the teachers rings a bell and the laughter and merry voices suddenly are stilled. Another sound of the bell and they fall in line, and at the third bell they march into school again. Why does the teacher insist that they shall stop playing? Not because it is wrong, but because it will be better for the pupils to quit playing and go back to lessons. Play is good, but it must not be the supreme aim of the pupil.

We expect a friend to visit us and we take the car to the depot, or the boat, to meet him, not for the sake of a car ride, but because the car is a great convenience, an instrument for which we are thankful, it is a means to an end. So Theosophy teaches that the things of the lower life—business, pleasure, wealth, fame—are not the things that we live *for,* but we must make them the things *by* which we live.

If we apply Theosophy to our personal life, we shall make all

things serve the higher self. All trouble and difficulties will be of service, for they will reveal some truth, something we could not know except by such teaching. These things will put some impress on our character which could not have been put there if we had not been just so softened to receive it.

When a man is wrestling with some passion or appetite which seems to say "you must give way to me," how shall he conquer it? He may tell himself that the laws of health demand that he shall conquer it, and he may think of the pain, sickness and misery he will suffer if he does not conquer it; or if it be a temptation to dishonesty he may think of the disgrace that would cover him if he yielded. Fear of pain, fear of disgrace and shame may help him conquer, but they are not the solid shore on which his feet should rest.

He must lay hold of the truth that right is right and that from his higher self will come all the strength that is needed to conquer if he obeys the voice of duty, and surrenders himself fully to the highest.

The man who keeps his purity, honesty, and strength by faith in his own divinity, may still care for his health, his reputation, and cultivate a healthy shame before his fellow-men. But these are not the King he serves, they are but servants who bring orders. Sometimes the servant must be disobeyed that obedience to the King may be complete. Sometimes the preservation of health and the care for reputation must be given up in order to keep purity and integrity.

We must sometimes forfeit the regard of our fellow-men in order to be upright, for the inner voice must always be obeyed. Such then is the ideal and such the help Theosophy gives for the perfecting of the personal life. I think you will agree with me that there is no grander ideal, and that no other philosophy or view of religion furnishes such helps for its attainment.

Fraternally yours,

JOHN SCHOFIELD.

We are in the hands of the Lord. There are no such things as "fortunate" or "unfortunate" events. There are only events—steps on our journey to the Sacred Land. BOOK OF ITEMS.

REVIEWS

CHRISTIANITY AND THE SOCIAL CRISIS.

THREE recent books on the relation between Religion and the problems which are usually referred to under the head of Socialism, show how deeply important a hold on the popular attention such questions have at the present time. There is not only the religious revival itself, wihch would naturally make any humanitarian subject interesting, but there is the great increase of socialistic sentiment which is so evident in our Western countries. This brings us at once to a most interesting and instructive comment, namely, that the problem of Socialism is a distinctly Western problem; not, as some socialistic writers would have us believe, because the peoples of the East are without sufficient enterprise to raise such questions, but because, under the Eastern religious and philosophical systems, a social problem cannot exist. It would be well worth serious inquiry to discover just why this is so, but that is foreign to the immediate object of this review.

R. J. Campbell, author of *The New Theology,* already noticed in this journal, has written a book entitled *Christianity and the Social Order;* Walter Rauschenbusch, professor of Church History in the Rochester Theological Seminary, has contributed a work called *Christianity and the Social Crisis* to the subject; while Charles Stelzle, superintendent of the department of Church and Labor of the Board of Home Missions of the Presbyterian Church, adds his quota in a study of modern conditions in a city, called *Christianity's Storm Center.* The three books form a remarkable and most interesting addition to the literature of the subject, for they are written from three entirely different points of view, and reach very different conclusions. All three agree that the great problem before western civilization at the present time is Socialism, all agree that something must be done to solve it, and all agree that the Church, that Religion, should take a foremost place in this work, as it is essentially a religious question, and not an economic one; but from this point on, they differ.

Mr. Campbell is frankly socialistic. He thinks that the Kingdom of God, which Christ repeatedly said was "within," is nothing but the application of the principles of Christianity, or what he conceives to be the principles of Christianity, to modern material conditions. A large part of his book is taken up with a superficial discussion of the meaning of The Kingdom of God in Jewish History, among the primitive Christians and in present-day Christianity. He has read his own opinions into his theme, and neither his history nor his philosophy will stand the test of criticism. Indeed, many reviewers have passed this part of his discussion by as not worth serious attention. Who can think, after reading the New Testament, that the Kingdom of God had anything whatever to do with this world? Not only are we repeatedly told the direct contrary, as for instance in the following verse from Romans, 14, 17; "For the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost," but the whole spirit of Christ's teaching was to the effect that the Kingdom of Heaven was not of this world, but was within;—in a word, a spiritual state or condition.

There would seem to be little doubt that *if* the Kingdom of God could be established on earth, our social problems would be solved. No sincere Christian could think otherwise, else religion would be a failure. But there is a very great difference between this and the idea that we can bring about the reign of God on earth by legislation, which is what Christian Socialists want to do. They put the cart before the horse. They wish to solve our economic muddles, which undoubtedly have their root in the evil in human nature, by passing laws against that evil, thus thinking to eradicate it. The whole of the world's experience

shows this to be impossible. We know that people cannot be legislated into being good, or into doing anything they do not want to do. Laws follow character, they do not precede it. There will be drunkenness and prostitution so long as people want to drink alcoholic liquors and want to have illicit sexual relations, all possible laws on the statute books notwithstanding.

The last half of Mr. Campbell's book is pure Socialistic propaganda. He gives many statistics of poverty, crime, degradation and squalor, with which most people at all conversant with the general subject, are already familiar, and which prove nothing except that there are many sore spots in the world which need remedying; something which everyone knows. Then he attempts to do what most Socialistic writers have balked at entirely, and which he only sketches, that is the outlining of a program of legislation which he thinks would bring about the great change in our economic conditions he so much desires. This is the weakest part of his book, for the absolute impracticability of the program is apparent, even on the surface. Let us hope that no state will ever be so rash as to try the experiment, for able thinkers and students believe that it would throw civilization back a thousand years.

It is painful to contrast this book with other of Mr. Campbell's writings. It is a grievous thing that the man who could write his recent sermon, "The Master on the Shore," should use his God-given talents to bolster up an impossible cause. It is pitiful that such powers of inspiration, guidance and true religious feeling and leadership, in a world so lacking in these rarest of gifts, should be perverted from their proper channels and turned downward to material ends.

Mr. Rauschenbusch's book is more ambitious, and from the point of view of scholarship, much better done. A student of history by profession, he discusses the historical roots of Christianity and then endeavors to interpret the social aims of Jesus. To the many who think that Jesus came to preach an inner life of the soul and that he cared little about the outer, social life, except that we render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, his conclusions fail to carry conviction. He holds that Christianity is essentially a social religion and that the reason why it has not heretofore undertaken the work of social regeneration is because it was too busy with historical and political obstructions which have now passed away.

It does not seem possible to us that any one can read the New Testament and doubt that Jesus' object was to preach a new gospel of the soul life. He told His disciples repeatedly that His Kingdom was not of this world, that He had not come for any outer reason whatever, but to teach that Kingdom of Heaven, which was within. Worldly wealth and power were as nothing in His eyes in comparison with the higher life; poverty was to be desired rather than feared or shunned, because experience had shown the distractions of wealth. So strongly did He feel this that He advised those who wished to follow Him to sell all their goods and give the proceeds to the poor. Now these strange modern disciples wish us to believe that His real object after all was to bring about a state of society wherein everyone would be happy and fat! If, as seems to be the concensus of opinion of all the Saints and Seers of the race, we only grow spiritually through tribulation and anguish, through self-renunciation and sacrifice, what would be the effect of satisfaction and ease upon the future growth of the Soul?

While not so outspokenly socialistic as Mr. Campbell, Mr. Rauschenbusch ends his book by a discussion of poverty, land, labor; the "people," as against the upper classes, and sees nothing ahead of us but communism, which he believes to be in accord with the underlying principles of Christianity. Perhaps it is, but we are so far from applying the fundamental principles of Christianity to any other part of our lives that there does not seem to be any very good reason why we should begin with economic conditions, particularly as there are a great variety of very excellent reasons why we should do no such thing.

Curiously enough we are more in accord with Mr. Stelzle than with either of our other authors, although Mr. Stelzle was for many years a working man and knows economic conditions from bitter experience. But he is not a Socialist. He realizes that Socialism is impossible and impracticable. A sincere and devout man, full of the true spirit of religion, and keen to bring the forces of religion to bear upon the problem, his book is by far the most practical of the three. He discusses modern social conditions, which he is admirably fitted to do both from personal experience and from his later professional work, and his conclusions are of great interest and value. Here is what he has to say about Socialism:

"What should be the attitude of the Church towards Socialism? First, it must recognize the right of every man to be a Socialist, if he is convinced that Socialism

is morally and economically sound. Second, it must recognize that there are some good things in Socialism, for which Socialism should be given credit. Third, workingmen should be informed that the Church does not endorse the present social system. It accepts only so much of the present system as is in accordance with the principles laid down by Jesus Christ. It insists that these principles shall be applied to society in all of its ramifications, but it also believes that others besides Socialists have both the brain and the heart to interpret these principles. Fourth, workingmen should be convinced that the Church is not offering them the Gospel as a mere sop, nor because it is afraid that some day they will bring on a revolution, and that it is offering the same Gospel, with all its privileges as well as all of its obligations, to their employers."

There are sympathetic studies of Trades Unions, the Slum, the Children of the Cities, and several chapters devoted to an exceedingly interesting description of the several kinds of social work carried on by the Churches. His remedy for the trouble is an aggressive evangelism. He would bring the essential truths of Christianity to every heart and every household. Nor does he think the conditions discouraging, for one of the most interesting parts of his book is his description of his own and his colleagues' work among the poor and especially among the workers. He says that he has invariably found that the workingman respects and admires and likes to hear about Jesus. It is the dogma and old-fashioned theology of the Churches with which he is no longer in sympathy.

Such is a brief and inadequate summary of three separate and divergent points of view towards one of the great problems which confront humanity to-day. It would seem that we had fulfilled our task but ill if we ended our notice of these three typical works without indicating in some measure our own view. We cannot speak for Theosophy, for no one has a right to do so. We do not pretend to speak for the Theosophical Society, for its constitution forbids it having any view on this or on any other question: we can speak for ourselves alone. To our minds, admitting, of course, that good Theosophists may differ theoretically from us, there is no problem. We find nothing requiring solution any more than the Eastern peoples do, and for the same reason. Reincarnation is a complete and perfect explanation of all the economic and social questions which are causing so much unrest, so much agitation, so much painful thought and heart-burning in the West.

We believe that every man is placed by God in exactly the right conditions to foster his spiritual growth. If he is poor and suffering, it is because he needs poverty and pain to develop his inner nature. If he is rich and prosperous, it is because wealth and ease will test his soul better than anything else. Furthermore, so exactly does the Great Law which governs the world and everything in it work, that we believe that not only are each man's conditions the best possible for him, but that they are exactly what he has himself earned by the use which he has made of his opportunities in the past. We reap what we sow in a manner so complete and so perfect that we never do or say or think anything that will not have its exact result and reaction upon our nature at some future time. The reaction may be immediate, as when we take poison, or it may be postponed for a very long period of time, perhaps for several lives; but the causes we have generated are stored up in Nature's warehouse, and sooner or later will be delivered to us in the shape of an effect upon our lives.

This simple belief, which is held by three-fifths of the human race, is a perfect explanation of the inequalities of existence, and of all the factors which go to make up the Socialistic position. If poverty becomes a necessary and desirable thing, an instrument in the hands of God, working for the regeneration of humanity, we certainly do not want to eliminate it, even if we could. If a man is born healthy and strong because he made good use of his health and strength in some past life, we can no longer envy him his good fortune. If he is born weak and sickly, we pity him, and do what we can to ameliorate his condition and to help and comfort him; but we no longer rail against a capricious God or try to take the running of the Universe out of His hands because we do not think He is doing it fairly.

In the East there is no jealousy nor bitterness between classes. It simply never occurs to a man there to resent the fact that another has something which he has not. He knows that what he lacks is due to his own fault, and he does not try to place the blame on Fate or Chance or on any other shoulders than his own. He accepts his lot, whatever it may be, secure in the belief that it is what he has himself earned, and that it furnishes him with the best possible opportunity to improve his condition. Not his material condition, for that is as nothing in the

eyes of God as compared with his spiritual interests. So the great shiboleth of the Socialists, "Equal opportunity for all," has no meaning for the man in the East. Of course there is equal opportunity for all. Is not the Universe managed by a great and just Law, the expression of the very Will of God, and is not every person in the world in exactly the right conditions to give him the greatest and the easiest opportunity? How could it possibly be otherwise?

To expect such a man to get excited about "Capital" and "Labor," "The means of production and distribution," "Interest," and other fetishes of the day, is about as sensible as to expect a great physicist to be troubled for fear the soap-bubbles blown by his child may upset the law of gravitation. They will not do so, and he knows it, and so does not trouble about it any more. If his friends should insist upon discussing as to how the weight of the soap-bubble might destroy the equilibrium of the world, and so forth, he either listens sympathetically, but with pity for their ignorance, or turns away in disgust at their stupidity, depending upon his nature. C. A. G., Jr.

Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit, by Auguste Sabatier, translated by Louise Seymour Houghton, and published by McClure, Phillips & Co., New York, 1904. The author, who died before this book was published, was Dean of the Protestant Faculty of Theology in the University of Paris. He shows that Christianity, as taught by Christ and the Apostles, was not a religion of authority, but a religion of the spirit. He traces, with great learning, the evolution of the kindred doctrines of the infallibility of the Church, and later of the Pope, in Catholicism, and of the infallibility of the Bible in Protestantism. He points out that "Clement of Alexandria placed philosophy beside the law, and the sages on a par with the prophets. Justin Martyr and Theophilus of Antioch no more doubted the divine character of the Sibylline Oracles than of the Prophecies of Isaiah. Tertullian held that every edifying book was divinely inspired. Origen went farther: he clearly distinguished in the Scriptures portions of highly unequal inspiration and value" (p.169).

Erasmus, more orthodox in some respects than Luther, "held that the apostles, though animated by the Holy Spirit, were none the less fallible men, and that without injury to the gospel they were mistaken in certain matters and ignorant in others" (p. 171).

"The Reformers, and Luther in particular, dreamed of anything rather than of raising up an exterior authority, infallible like that of the Church, and functioning in the same manner. It never occurred to them to consider the Bible as a Codex of absolute and divine prescriptions, to be accepted independently of their possible relation to the Christian conscience" (p. 160).

Nothing could be more liberal than the statement of Luther, quoted (p. 158) from his *Works,* Erlangen edition, vol. lxii, pp. 128-133; lxiii, pp. 157-379; and *cf.* xlvii, p. 357: "Christ is the Master, the Scriptures are the servant. Here is the true touchstone for testing all the books: we must see whether they work the works of Christ or not. The book which does not teach Christ is not apostolic, were St. Peter or St. Paul its writer. On the other hand, the book which preaches Christ is apostolic, were its author Judas, Annas, Pilate, or Herod. . . . John accords little space to the acts of Christ, much to his words. The other Gospels say much of his acts, less of his teaching. This is why the former is the chief gospel, unique, most precious, the one to be preferred above all the others. . . . The Epistle of James is a veritable epistle of straw, for there is nothing evangelical in it."

Professor Sabatier concludes by urging a revival of original Christianity—of the religion of the spirit—and reminds us that the Quakers, for instance, "have managed perfectly well to do without any exterior authority," such as Confessions of Faith (p. 278).

It is a book that is making a considerable stir in Protestant circles, for the author was devoutly religious as well as learned. It should be recommended to all church members who show a tendency to "return to Christ." X.

A Prophet in Babylon which was recently published by the Fleming H. Revell Co. is attracting considerable attention and is well worth reading. It is the story of a clergyman of a fashionable New York Church who fails to find

within the organization to which he belongs the elements which are necessary to enable the Church to solve the complicated problems of modern existence, particularly as respects the contest between the rich and poor, and the general conditions of poverty and misfortune. His congregation do not care anything about such matters and are content to glide smoothly along the easy pathway of their prosperous lives and ignore the degradation, squalor and misery which surrounds them. John Gaunt, after preaching to this inert and soulless congregation for several years, finally wakes up and begins to find the atmosphere stifling. And no wonder. Any good man with high ideals would find the atmosphere described by the author as quite intolerable.

What does he do? Does he try to raise his followers' ideals, does he preach fiery sermons calling upon his people to raise themselves out of their mire of self-satisfied contentment, does he use his great powers as orator and student to preach a higher and nobler life, a life of self-sacrifice and devotion to the interests of another? No. He resigns his charge and starts a "League of Service," which is nothing but "an organization founded upon lines that copy the institution which he repudiated." That is the weakness of the book and where, in our opinion, the author, Dr. W. J. Dawson, a London clergyman of orthodox connections, sadly misses the point.

The charge frequently made that the Christian Church is blind to the needs of the times, that it ignores the vital factors of modern life, which are pressing for solution, that it is content to go on expressing worn-out ideals and old and stale thoughts which the world has outgrown, is dealt with at considerable length, and with a certain vividness and power which comes, we are sure, from a devout and sincere mind; and we believe the book will be a useful contribution to this phase of current religious discussion. It will make many sincere members of Church congregations wonder whether they have been doing all that their own ideals call upon them to do; and it will probably give others the first information they have of the existence of important and world-wide problems which affect the Church.

So, while there is much in the book with which we cannot agree; much, indeed which seems to us distinctly pernicious, on the whole we believe that the book will do good, and we can, therefore, recommend it to our readers with the reservations already set forth. C. A. G., Jr.

MAGAZINE LITERATURE.

The Hibbert Journal for January makes features of modernism and mysticism, which are not so much opposed as one might think. The Rev. George Tyrrell, leader of the English modernists, shows how he has freed himself from ecclesiastical trammels by the frankness with which he discusses the subject. "Modernism," he says, "is a method and a spirit rather than a system; a mode of inquiry, not a body of results," which would do admirably well as a definition of Theosophy. He describes the state of mind of the scholastic theologian, contrasts it with the modernist view point, and shows that the two are irreconcilable; so irreconcilable that he has no hope that the Vatican party can ever even "climb down." He ventures a prediction as to the possible issue of the struggle, but we are inclined to think him a little too pessimistic. The article is followed by a statement of the orthodox position by a well-known Jesuit writer, John Gerard, and after reading it one is left with the wonder whether it is the best that can be said for the Church party. The article by Professor Coe on "The Sources of Mystical Revelation" we hope to mention more at length later. Mrs. Stuart Moore writes about New Thought and calls it "The Magic and Mysticism of To-day." The editor has one of his illuminating and beautifully written articles on "The Alchemy of Thought."

The Annals of Psychical Science for December continues the account of Professor Bottazzi's remarkable seances with Eusepia Paladino. The care with which tests were devised and precautions taken against fraud make these experiments among the most valuable in the history of spiritualism. In view of such work as this, and of Sir Oliver Lodge's recent announcement, a belief in the substantial existence of the "other world" would seem to be proved beyond peradventure, whatever may be our opinion of the causes of the phenomena. Professor Charles Richet suggests the use of the word "metapsychism" to replace "occultism," so

that hereafter we may expect our scientific brethren to tell us all about the things we have known and written about as occultism, just as they have adopted hypnosis instead of the same thing under its older name, mesmerism. In the January issue there is a long and copiously illustrated article about William Blake, "An Inquiry into Premonitions," by Professor Richet, and some photographs of materializations. The February number contains a long and interesting description of remarkable cures made at Lourdes and some more photographs of "spirits." The last two numbers appear in a new dress.

International Journal of Ethics also serves the spirit of the times, for it has two articles which will especially appeal to the readers of this magazine. Mr. Chester Holcombe compares Oriental and Western ethics, using the Tao-Teh-King of Lao-tze, and the teachings of Confucius for his material, and he is evidently a warm admirer of the Eastern system. There is also a sympathetic sketch of the Psychology of Mysticism by E. Boutroux of Paris, who appeals for a broad and complete study of the subject as bearing very directly upon "the life and destiny of individuals and of humanity."

The Monist for January. The opening article is by Mr. W. E. Ayton Wilkinson, of Burma, India, and its point of view is suggested by the title "Will-Force and the Conservation of Energy." He maintains that the idea of the influence of mind over matter is gaining recognition among men of science, who, however, find difficulty in reconciling it with their cherished theory with regard to the conservation of energy.

Wm. Pepperell Montague, of Columbia University, discusses the problem of consciousness from the point of view of the question "Are Mental Processes in Space?" He contends "that the prevailing notion that feelings can both exist and exist nowhere is not only paradoxical but false," and his conclusion is that "the existence of mental processes in space would seem to be equally a postulate of common sense and a desideratum of psychophysical method."

In reply to these two articles the Editor treats of his own "Monistic Conception of Consciousness," and he considers the soul-conception as the fundamental problem of philosophy.

Professor Lynn Thorndike, of Northwestern University, has a paper on "The Attitude of Origen and Augustine toward Magic," and the Rev. J. W. Buckham writes of "The Return to the Truth in Mysticism."

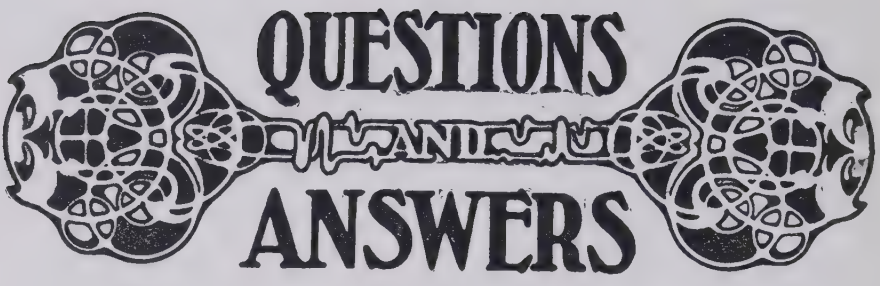
This article gives Dr. Paul Carus, the Editor of *The Monist*, occasion to express in some detail his views on the subject of "Mysticism," which he considers as "positively dangerous, although he does not deny that under special circumstances it may be beautiful as art and sometimes wholesome." Dr. Carus believes that the danger in mysticism lies in the fact that clearness of thought is the first requirement for the construction of a true philosophy.

M. O. Neufchotz de Jassy presents a very original and novel theory in an article entitled "The Mythological Hebrew Terms Explained by the Sanskrit." He finds Sanskrit sources for almost every mythological Hebrew term in Genesis.

The recent *Open Courts* have much of interest in their tables of contents which we have no space to mention. A valuable article is a translation of the report of the Count d'Alviella of the symposium of opinions on the present religious situation, collected by the *Mercure de France*. The replies are grouped according as they consider religion to be in the process of evolution or dissolution, or neither. Church politics receives attention at the hands of Mr. F. W. Fitzpatrick. The February number is rather theological. There are articles on "What we Know About Jesus," "A Justification of Modern Theology," "A Plea for Progress in Theology."

Theosophisches Leben. The December number has an interesting article by the editor, Mr. Paul Raatz, on "Sun, Moon and Earth," and a pretty allegory by Sandor Weiss. The January issue contains a study of Nietzsche, and a "Fragment" by Cavé. The next number has translations from Jasper Neimand, Cavé, and a continuation of the study of Nietzsche.

A translation from the writings of Charles Johnston appears in all three months.



QUESTION 81.—*Would matter be non-existent apart from our consciousness of it?*

ANSWER.—The matter referred to in the question is undoubtedly physical or objective matter, for it is spoken of as being "existent" while primordial matter or substance, which is eternal and omnipresent, is said to be non-existent (on this, our material plane). "Our Consciousness" probably means our consciousness on the material or objective plane—the consciousness derived through the physical senses or organs. If my conception of the question is correct, then my answer is, *Certainly not.* If a man lose all his power to sense through the physical organs, or rather, if the physical instrument of sensation, the body, were separated from him, as in death or trance, yet the body would exist and all other material bodies along with it. Concentration may become so intense upon a spiritual idea that we lose all sense of bodily existence, as it were, in the one thought, for the time being, but that does not destroy our bodies or make them non-existent. They exist all the time whether we are conscious of it or not. Matter is indestructible in its essence, while its forms are continually changing. "There is not a single instance, or the remotest suspicion of the annihilation of an atom of matter ever brought to the light either by Eastern Adepts or Western Scientists," said Subba Row in his "Writings." Matter may become invisible and intangible to physical sight and touch, but it still *is* though it be resolved into its primordial or original state or condition. It is as absurd to suppose that matter becomes non-existent when we become, so to say, unconscious of it, as to suppose that time ceases when we lose consciousness of it. H. P. B. once said "Can we say that because we are asleep during the night and lose consciousness of time, that therefore, the hours do not strike?" M. W. D.

ANSWER.—Matter for *us* would be non-existent if we were in a condition of unconsciousness, but matter *per se* is as eternal as Spirit, of which it is but a manifestation; Spirit-Matter being the origin of all things, spirit and matter its first differentiation in the manifested universe. K. H.

ANSWER.—Matter, as we know it, is an illusion of the senses, an effect of our limited consciousness. The clairvoyant sees and the astral passes through it. Strictly speaking, however, it does not seem correct to speak of it as non-existent. It is real on its own plane, the representative of real matter, Mulaprakriti.
A. H.

QUESTION 82.—*Should principle ever be sacrificed to expediency?*

ANSWER.—If principle were always based on Eternal Truth I do not see how it could be necessary to sacrifice it, but our principle being generally based on a limited knowledge of right and wrong, circumstances will arise in which it is necessary either to sacrifice or else broaden and extend it.

It seems to me that the question of principle versus expediency is one of the great means of progress. A. H.

ANSWER.—Never under any circumstances whatever. There is only one possible answer to this question, and if I wrote at length it would be but to repeat the same thing.

I can imagine hundreds of cases where ordinary human nature would be unable to choose the higher and and more difficult course, but that such failure would be right I cannot for a moment grant. There is no compromise possible in this matter as it is framed in the question. We may often be puzzled as to what is right, and we may, therefore, often err, for to do so is human; but the question presupposes that we know what is right and deliberately select wrong for the sake of expediency. This can never be anything but a spiritual blunder and therefore a sin. G. Hijo.

Answer.—In studying this question, we may, with profit, separate wisdom from knowledge, and both of these from action, viewing each in the light of our highest understanding.

Wisdom alone, it is said, can discern between true and false doctrines, between what action is to be performed, and what is not—and how structures are builded in which it may dwell. This is the Theosophia, of which is written "Whomsoever Thou guidest, none can lead astray."

Knowledge alone is therefore in itself insufficient—rich in splendor, and priceless though it be, its principles of virtue have to listen to the voice of wisdom, hidden somewhere in every soul—seeking the highest service, which alone makes knowledge worth knowing. Knowledge should follow . . . not lead!

Now the point in question is in regard to action, and, if we regard principle as identical with justice and law, we may believe the highest teaching invariably points to "principle," to which we may justly consecrate both knowledge and action. H. E. D.

Question 83.—*What really is the Theosophical view regarding Hell?*

Answer.—Hell is an Anglo-Saxon term evidently derived from the goddess Hela, the Goddess-Queen of the Land of the Dead, says the *Glossary*. It is also derived from the Greek Hades. The Christians have their hot Hell, and the Scandinavians their cold Hell. All exoteric religions have their Hells whether hot, cold or dark. Hell with the Egyptians became a place of punishment by fire, not earlier than the seventeenth or eighteenth dynasty, when Typhon was transformed from a god into a devil. H. P. B. says in the *Glossary* that "at whatever time this dread superstition was implanted in the minds of the poor ignorant masses, the scheme of a burning Hell and souls tormented therein is purely Egyptian. Ra (the Sun) became the Lord of the Furnace in *Karr,* the Hell of the Pharaohs, and the sinner was threatened with misery in the heat of infernal fires. The Theosophical view is, that Hell or the lower or nether is our Earth, the lowest in its chain—the darkness of Matter, or animal man. The Creating Powers produce Man, but fail in their object. They strive to endow man with a conscious immortal Spirit, but they fail, and they are represented as being punished for the failure if not for the attempt. They are sentenced to imprisonment in Matter and upon Earth, within Animal Men or bodies. The graphic symbol was disfigured by the Church Fathers, who took advantage of the metaphor and allegory in every old religion to turn them to the benefit of the new one. Thus man was transformed into the darkness of a material Hell, his divine consciousness obtained from his indwelling principle, the Mánasa, or the incarnated God, became the glaring flames of the infernal Region, and our Globe that Hell itself." Myalba is the Tibetan name of our Earth or Hell. There are Eight Hells or states of punishment, or rather degrees of suffering for our past misdeeds on Earth, and the last and lowest is called Avitchi in Sanskrit. The meaning of this word is "uninterrupted hell." Here "the culprits *die and are reborn without interruption*—yet not without hope of final redemption." We are told in the *Voice* "that the esoteric doctrine knows of no hell, or place of punishment, other than a man-bearing planet or earth. Avitchi is a state, not a locality." The *Secret Doctrine* says, "The Earth, or earth-life rather, is the only Avitchi (Hell) that exists for the men of our humanity on this globe. It is a counterpart of Devachan. Such a state follows the Soul wherever it goes, whether into Kama Loka, as a semi-conscious Spook, or into a human body when reborn to suffer Avitchi. Our Philosophy recognizes no other Hell." M. W. D.

Answer.—The distinction between the organization known as theTheosophical Society and Theosophy *per se* must ever be kept in mind. Truth and Theosophy in the last analysis being one and the same, it follows that the correct Theosophical view of Hell, or anything else, must of necessity be the truth, while the view

of a member of the Theosophical Society may be very far from the truth. As it requires the illumination of Adeptship to testify personally correctly concerning all the unseen factors of anti-mortem, mortem and post-mortem states of consciousness, I can only be a competent witness concerning the mortem state, not having any recollection of the ante-mortem nor experience in the next post-mortem state. As to what constitutes Hell in my present incarnation, I would classify as Hell all vibrations on the plane of sensations and emotions which produce misery, worry, grief, depression, etc., in fact, every misery producing departure from the zero point of serenity which constitutes the dividing line between the different degrees of suffering and the opposite side, happiness, joy and bliss. Reasoning by analogy I would conclude that this same pair of opposites obtains on the anti-mortem and post-mortem planes of consciousness. Hell being a condition rather than a location—Environment and existing psychic vibrating currents in any locality will of course produce corresponding responses where the subject has not arrived at a degree of progress to become a student of and a controller of inward vibrations sufficient to prevent responsiveness and avoid being victimized. Hell is ignorance and misery. Heaven is wisdom and joy—on any plane of consciousness.

W. A. R. TENNEY.

ANSWER.—The teaching of Theosophy as regards Hell is generally to the effect that only long and persistent choosing of evil instead of good, can condemn a soul to annihilation, which is hell, or everlasting death. A soul which has never had a thought of good, not one aspiration towards a better state, has nothing to connect it with the true Ego, is only a temporary personality, and falls away from the Ego at death, as a dead leaf falls from a bough. It sometimes happens, we are told, that after such separation, the soul, now become purely animal, fades out in Kama-loka, as do all other animal souls. But it frequently happens that after the present life of the soul-less man is ended, he is again and again reincarnated into new personalities, each one more abject than the other. The impulse of *animal* life is too strong; it cannot wear itself out in one or two lives only.

The Earth, or earth-life rather, is the only Avitchi (Hell) that exists for the men of our humanity on this globe. It is a state, not a locality, a counterpart of Devachan. Theosophy recognizes no other hell.

K. H.

ANSWER.—In every department of Nature there is work and rest, seed-time and harvest, action and re-action—and appropriate seasons and cycles for all these in the manifestations of what is called the great law of Karma. . . . This is said unerringly to adjust each effect to its cause, admitting of neither bribe nor favoritism. Reference to this law, we believe, may be found in every great teaching, inspiring justice, and order, and the value of good works—the same or its correspondent being equal to "Whatsoever a man soweth, that also will he reap." Add to this the reasonableness and justice of making adjustment where it is due, and upon the plane to which it belongs—and the teaching of reincarnation completes an explanation of retribution which is intelligible, not impossible to perform, and wholly constructive in restoring balance and harmony.

I believe there is no hell for man, except that made by man, and that he may unmake it if he so will, by restoring the law, seeking virtue, and the working of good works.

One view of the subject might possibly be portrayed as a horrible desire for a selfish heaven—and if such a place really existed, it would be hell.

H. E. D.

T·S·ACTIVITIES

THE ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE T. S. A.

The Fourteenth Annual Convention of the Theosophical Society in America will be held at Dayton, Ohio, on Saturday, April 25, 1908, beginning at 10.30 A. M., in a hall at the southwest corner of Fourth and Jefferson Streets.

For the following Sunday afternoon and evening, the Dayton Branch has arranged two public lectures, the one by Professor Mitchell upon "Fundamental Aspects of Religion," the other by Mr. Charles Johnston upon "What the Theosophical Society is Not."

Proposals to Amend the Constitution and By-Laws.

The following resolution, tabled a year ago, will be before the Convention:

"*Resolved,* That the words "in America" be omitted from the name of the Society."

The following notice of a proposed resolution has been received and sent to all Branches:

"Resolution to be brought before the T. S. in A. Convention, 1908.

Be it resolved that the basis for representation shall be by individual voting and proxies; every member in good standing being allowed to vote; and be it further resolved that the Constitution of the T. S. in A. be revised to conform thereto.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signed] Fred Howerton.

San Pedro, Cal., January 14, 1908."

Notice of a number of proposed amendments to the By-Laws, to be presented by the Los Angelenos Branch, has been sent by them to all Branches.

A New Branch.

A charter has been issued to Mr. George E. Harter and others, of Toledo, Ohio. to constitute *The Shila Branch of the T. S. A.*

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AUSTRIA.

March 8, 1908.

Since the beginning of the year, conditions in the Vienna T. S. have notably improved. Our Meetings are well attended, and a lively interest is taken in the discussions and questions. The public lectures, largely given by lecturers visiting us from Germany, are often attended by 300 or 400 listeners, and then a certain percentage of the audience comes to our Branch meetings. We have now about 150 members.

In the past, we have had many difficult experiences; but we no longer allow them to disturb us, but work quietly onward.

The spiritual movement, which is now passing through the whole civilized world is also making itself felt in Austria, but our situation is not easily intelligible for outsiders. Two chief streams or directions exist here, along with numerous,

but not very significant side-streams. The one is the Jewish materialistic stream, which, for the most part wears the mask of Free-thought, Liberalism, Science, and Socialism; the opposing tendency is the Anti-semitic Clerical tendency, consisting mostly of the smaller business people, who have to struggle for their existence against the Jewish plutocracy and the Socialists; further, the aristocracies of money and birth, and the entire clergy, Catholic and Protestant, which uses the mask of Religion, in order to serve its own ends, though of course I grant that among *all* parties there exist *genuinely religious* minded men and women.

So it comes that the inflowing spiritual impulse is perceived and viewed with very mixed feelings.

Warmly and joyfully welcomed by all who are sincerely striving after Truth, whether Christians or Jews, it is viewed with reserve and distrust by those who fear to lose influence or power.

That this movement has a force and power which is not yet perceived and apprehended by all, is incontestably true, but this is also extremely fortunate, for if it were, efforts would at once be made to crush it, or to corrupt it or turn it into other channels.

But we will work on, and hope for the best. Struggles, perhaps more fearful than any which the world has seen, may, perhaps, not be averted, but the victory must remain with Truth, and perhaps it is ordained for many of us to take up once more the same work, the same task, at the close of this epoch, at the close of this century.

With friendliest and most hearty greetings,

Sincerely yours,
FRANZ LANG.

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA.

HISTORY.*

The Theosophical Society was established in New York, on November 17, 1875. Chief among its founders were Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, Colonel Henry S. Olcott and William Q. Judge. Mme. Blavatsky declared that the Theosophical Society was the successor of a long series of societies and movements, which have existed in the last quarter of each century, owing their being to a definite spiritual impulse coming from the Elder Brothers of the race.

The Theosophical Society was founded for study and investigation; its members were a body of seekers for truth on humane and tolerant lines, and its cardinal principle was complete spiritual and religious liberty, every member having the right to hold and express any belief or disbelief, and being at the same time required to show perfect tolerance of the beliefs or disbeliefs of others. It was held that this perfect tolerance and spiritual liberty would do much to break down the barriers which have separated races and creeds, and would thus open the way for a realization of the Brotherhood of Mankind.

Foreign Branches were formed; and in November, 1879, Mme. Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott went to Europe, visiting the London Branch, on their way to India, and leaving Mr. W. Q. Judge as the leading worker for the Society in America. Mme. Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott fixed their headquarters at Bombay and later at Madras, and the work of the Society was pushed vigorously in India and Ceylon.

Two main events marked this period of activity in India. First, there was the clear enunciation of a system of philosophy, based on the teaching of Reincarnation through Karma ("whatever a man sows, the same shall he also reap,") and the teaching of Liberation of Nirvana. This system first outlined in Mme. Blavatsky's magazine, *The Theosophist*, was then very lucidly set forth by Mr. A. P. Sinnett, Editor of *The Pioneer* of Allahabad, and later completed by Mme. Blavatsky in the *Secret Doctrine*. The second noteworthy event was an attack on Mme. Blavatsky, the occasion of which was a series of psychic experiments in which she took part, as told by Mr. Sinnett in *The Occult World*. These experiments were made the basis of a bitter attack first by Europeans resident in Madras, and then by the London "Society for Psychical Research."

*[This history was sent at the request of the United States Census Bureau for inclusion in its report upon religious organizations, and as supplementary to the statistical information previously furnished them. It is well for all members of the Society occasionally to review the historic development of the organization, and for this reason, as well as for its intrinsic interest, we print it here.—Ed.]

Illness compelled Mme. Blavatsky to return to Europe, where she wrote a series of remarkable books: *The Secret Doctrine,* in two volumes, *The Voice of the Silence, The Key to Theosophy,* and edited a magazine, *Lucifer,*—(The Light-bringer.)

The movement grew rapidly in America under the able leadership of Mr. W. Q. Judge, who formed many Branches, founded a magazine, *The Path,* wrote *The Ocean of Theosophy,* and edited translations of the Bhagavad Gita, and Patanjali's *Yoga Aphorisms.*

Mme. Blavatsky died in London, on May 8, 1891. A recent convert, Mrs. Annie Besant, became the most active worker for the Society in England. Mrs. Besant co-operated cordially with Mr. Judge for some years, thus carrying the work forward in the West, while Colonel Olcott continued it in the East. In 1894, Mrs. Besant visited India, and shortly after, with the support and active co-operation of Colonel Olcott, she began to make charges against Mr. Judge, then Vice-President of the Society. This matter was protracted through many months. As a result, the Society was divided into two camps,—one side, taking their stand on the principle of spiritual and religious liberty, and on the Constitution of the Society, affirmed that Mr. Judge had a perfect right to hold and express any belief or disbelief concerning any psychic phenomena, or any other matter of philosophical belief, without question from any member of the Society, official or otherwise; and the other side maintaining accusations against Mr. Judge, and thus tacitly asserting the right of inquisition, and putting the Society in the position of holding that certain views were true and others untrue, and so destroying its impartial and impersonal character.

As a result of this division, those members who adhered to the original purposes and principles of the Society—the search for truth, on a basis of complete spiritual and religious liberty and toleration—joined with Mr. Judge in a reorganization of the Society, forming a series of autonomous national Societies: The Theosophical Society in America, the Theosophical Society in England, in Ireland, in Norway, in Sweden, in Germany, and so forth; all these being integral parts of the Theosophical Movement, initiated at New York in 1875.

After a further contest over the principle of autonomy and free representative government, in 1898, the Theosophical Society in America entered on a period of steady scientific, philosophical and humanitarian work, along the original lines of the free search for truth, and in close co-operation with those autonomous national Societies mentioned above, which had taken the same stand for spiritual liberty in 1895. A part of the work of the Society found expression in *The Theosophical Forum,* and, later, THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, which offers an open platform for the study of all questions of religion, philosophy, science and ethics along the lines of complete tolerance and religious liberty.

A strong movement for union has arisen in the autonomous national Societies already mentioned, as a result of which the Society has once more returned to its original international character, and now exists as an international body of students, united in the search for truth, in complete tolerance and spiritual liberty, and believing that this method will in time break down all barriers of race-hatred and hostility between creeds and classes, and will unite mankind in a free spiritual Brotherhood.

Article II of the Constitution reads:

"The principal aim and object of this Society is to form a nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature, and the psychical powers latent in man."

Article V reads:

"Any person declaring his sympathy with the First Object of the Society may be admitted to membership as provided by the By-laws.

"Every member has the right to believe or disbelieve in any religious system or philosophy, and to declare such belief or disbelief without affecting his standing as a member of the Society, each being required to show that tolerance of the opinions of others which he expects for his own."

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